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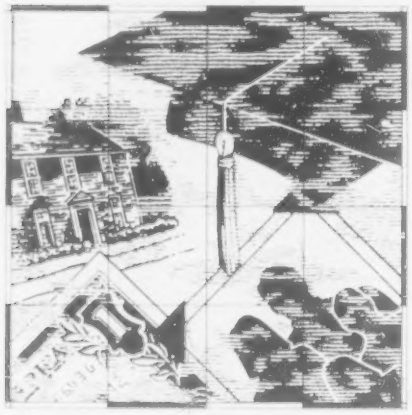
The American Dream



A National Survey by

The Wall Street Journal.

Conducted for
The Wall Street Journal
by The Roper Organization, Inc.

February, 1987

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Introduction

This report presents the results of a national survey on The American Dream, commissioned by The Wall Street Journal and conducted by The Roper Organization.

Over the years, many polls have explored isolated elements of this topic, such as expectations for the future, the importance of upward mobility, and attitudes toward home ownership. However, this is the first comprehensive survey of public attitudes and opinions toward The American Dream.

Even before the term was coined during the Great Depression, the ideal of The American Dream provided a powerful symbol of America's economic, social and cultural opportunities. The Dream emerged from a promise of a society in which individuals have the opportunity to improve their relative position, regardless of their race, creed or class. It represented a vision of opportunity and possibility.

In the minds of many, The American Dream is one of the fundamental elements that distinguishes America from other nations. Believing in The American Dream — that progress indeed happens and "the best is yet to come" — is basic to the claim of American exceptionalism, observed an Oxford University team last year.

Rapid economic growth in the post–World War II era helped to fuel The Dream, as the U.S. achieved worldwide economic leadership. The standard of living for most Americans rose dramatically.

Changing economic realities in the 1970s and 1980s, combined with shifting social and cultural values, have caused many observers to wonder whether the underpinnings of The American Dream are eroding. Economists report that, in constant dollars, median household income peaked in 1973 and has actually declined since. Average weekly earnings were higher in 1962 than in 1985. And the cost of buying a home, a car, and sending one's child to college have all increased faster than wages.

From these and other statistics, many experts have concluded that The American Dream is becoming unattainable for an increasing number of middle class Americans. This perspective has been widely reported by many of the nation's leading media: "Keeping up is hard to do," concludes one publication, in an article on the middle class' struggle to hold on. "For millions of breadwinners, The American Dream is becoming the impossible dream," says another. Indeed, it has become the common wisdom in many circles that The American Dream is either dead or dying.

But what do all of these statistics mean to the American people? Do they feel The American Dream is still alive? If so, how important is it? For which groups is it most alive? What does The American Dream mean? Does it mean the same thing to everyone, or are there many American Dreams? Looking ahead, is the long-term future of The American Dream secure, or not?

These are some of the questions addressed in this study. This report begins by presenting the Overview and Highlights of the study, which synthesize the study's most important findings. The Major Findings section then presents the in-depth results and commentary, with supporting charts and tables. This section is divided into six chapters:

Chapter 1:
The National Mood & The American Dream *looks at people's expectations regarding their personal future and the future of the country, including specific areas of optimism and pessimism. It also looks at how much control people feel they have over what happens in their lives.*

Chapter 2:
America, The Land of Opportunity *explores perceptions regarding opportunities for advancement. Are there more or fewer opportunities today than in the past? Do people feel they personally have more or fewer opportunities than other Americans?*

Chapter 3:
The State of The American Dream *looks at the degree to which people feel The American Dream is alive and if it has personal meaning. It also examines how Americans define The American Dream, and how they define success. And it discusses who Americans feel best exemplifies The American Dream.*

Chapter 4:
The Road to The American Dream *looks at how far people feel they have come on the road to their American Dream, how this compares with their expectations, and how far they expect to get.*

Chapter 5:
What Does The American Dream Cost? *This chapter quantifies the amount of money people feel they would need "just to get by," to live in "reasonable comfort," and to fulfill "all their dreams." The results are compared to actual household income.*

Chapter 6:
The Future of The American Dream *looks at expectations regarding the future, including perceived threats to the future of The American Dream.*

The study is based on telephone interviews conducted in mid-October 1986, with a national representative cross-section of 1506 adults. A supplemental sample of 148 black adults [making a total sample of 258 black adults] was also interviewed to permit in-depth analysis of this important segment of the population.

Technical details and a description of the methodology appear in the Appendix. Exact question wording and context can be seen in the questionnaire, which also appears at the back of the report.

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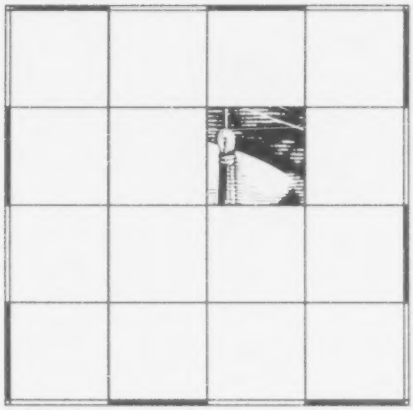


The American Dream: Has it lost its power, its appeal, its significance? In an era when the United States and the American people face unprecedented challenges both at home and abroad, is The American Dream still alive?

The more somber economic climate of the past decade, compared to the heady economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s, is causing some to question the vitality of The American Dream today. Some say Americans are no longer achieving the material progress we've grown accustomed to. Hence, the promise of The American Dream must have faded.

For a nation used to world leadership, Americans today confront a host of disconcerting problems. The gaping trade deficit announces our loss of industrial supremacy and the emergence of potent economic rivals in the Far East and Western Europe. The continuing controversy over nuclear arms reductions demonstrates our American homeland could be ravaged by a hostile power.

These developments, and others, have bred a certain pessimism among analysts and commentators, calling into question the viability of The American Dream. This survey, however, finds such pessimism to be unfounded.

Most Americans, in fact, feel The American Dream is alive and well. Further, they are confident they'll ultimately attain, or come close to attaining, their own American Dream. To paraphrase Mark Twain, accounts of The Dream's death have been greatly exaggerated.

Why does The American Dream endure? We found the answer by examining what The American Dream means to most people.

Most discussions of the meaning of The American Dream center around one of two broad interpretations. The first focuses on economic opportunity and progress. It is a dream of affluence and material comfort, of doing better than previous generations. It is a dream of America, land of opportunity, and Horatio Alger, the self–made man.

The second definition is more spiritual. It is America, home of freedom and justice. It is our Puritan fathers' "City on a Hill," a shining moral light to the rest of the world. It is a dream of the pursuit of life, liberty and individual happiness, without fear of persecution or intolerance.

Economic or spiritual? According to the American people, The American Dream is both these and more. While economic factors are important, they are not all. Financial security is a vital component of The Dream. Being "rich" is not.

Highlights

Above all, The American Dream is intensely personal. It focuses on the opportunity to have happy personal relationships with family and friends. To be respected and well–educated. To be a good parent and a good worker.

This personal nature of The Dream explains why it thrives. It confirms our optimism about eventually attaining our American Dream. And it gives us hope that, despite the challenges of the future, The American Dream will survive.

The mosaic of Americans' attitudes toward The American Dream, while complex, reveals a generally bright and hopeful picture. It is seen in how people define The Dream; how much meaning they ascribe to it; how optimistic they are about reaching it; and how they view its future.

1. The American Dream Defined

For most, The American Dream is defined in traditional terms and in goals which are fairly realistic or, at least, not unreachable. It is by no means the impossible dream. A high school education for themselves [84%] and a college education for their children [77%], freedom of choice in how to live [80%], owning a home [78%] — these are the key ingredients of The American Dream.

Interestingly, dreams of becoming wealthy are not important to most Americans. Financial security — distinct from wealth — is important [64%]. But being "rich" is not [38%]. Of course, it does take money to own a home or to send one's children to college.

We see a similar pattern in what it means to be successful. The list is headed by family and friends [83% to 95%], being one of the best at the job one does [80%], being well educated [77%] — all non–material. Power and influence [16%], wealth [12%], and fame [8%] finish last on the list.

2. Financial Realists, Not Would–Be Millionaires

Further evidence of the public's realistic goals and expectations: the average American said an annual household income of $50,000 would fulfill all their dreams. Although this is more than twice the actual annual household income for the average respondent, it is surprisingly modest.

3. The American Dream Personified

To add further understanding to the public's definition of The American Dream, we asked respondents which individual best exemplifies their idea of The American Dream. What is most striking is no one person stands out as the personification of The American Dream. In fact, 35% said they didn't know who exemplifies The American Dream.

Family members, however, were cited most often [11%], further indicating the truly personal nature of The American Dream. Beyond family, Americans name John F. Kennedy [8%] and Abraham Lincoln [6%] most frequently, followed by Martin Luther King [4%], Ronald Reagan [4%] and Lee Iacocca [4%].

4. The American Dream: Alive and Well, Meaningful and Attainable

Realistic expectations help to explain why so many Americans feel that The American Dream, as they define it, is alive and within reach.

Virtually all Americans believe The American Dream is alive [86%], and most feel it has personal meaning for them [68%]. While there are differences in degree between various subgroups, these general patterns hold true for all segments of the population.

This runs counter to the views of so many "experts" who repeatedly herald the demise of The American Dream. Despite their prognostications, the promise of The American Dream remains real for most Americans.

Americans place themselves relatively far along on the road to realizing their American Dream. Looking ahead, they're confident they will ultimately attain their American Dream, or come close to it.

To measure this, we asked where people currently stand on the road to their own American Dream, however they personally define it. On a ten-point scale [1 meaning they are just starting out and 10 meaning they have already achieved their American Dream:], the average response is 5.8, just beyond the mid-point. When asked how far along they will ultimately get, the average response jumps to 8.2.

And the optimism is widespread. Every subgroup in the population feels they will ultimately get to at least the 7.4 mark — about three-quarters of the way.

5. America: Still The Land of Opportunity

Opportunity for upward mobility, self-fulfillment or to pursue one's own goals is fundamental to The American Dream. Despite reports about the struggle of today's middle class to "hold on" to the economic gains of the 1950s and 1960s, the American public continues to believe there are the same or more opportunities today than in the past [75%]. And most people feel they have the same opportunities [61%] as most other Americans, or more [28%].

Where do the best opportunities lie? Where do people feel they should work to get ahead? The entrepreneurial spirit which has swept the country is evident here as the public gives the highest rating to a business of one's own [58%]. Large corporations are rated second [56%], followed by small businesses [52%]. Government agencies [45%] and non-profit organizations [35%] finish lower on the list.

However, the opportunity pie is not perceived to be equally divided for all Americans; we believe certain groups have fewer opportunities available to them. The disabled [72%], recent immigrants [53%], homosexuals [52%] and Hispanics [49%] are mentioned most frequently.

6. The Dream of Young Americans

The staying power of The American Dream is probably best illustrated and explained by the views of the young. While sharing the same fundamental belief in the meaningfulness of The American Dream, young Americans are also more bullish than others about their abilities to achieve it.

Younger Americans [under 30] believe most strongly that there are the same or more opportunities today than in the past [78%]. They are the most likely to feel that they personally have more opportunities than most other Americans. They are the most optimistic about their personal future. And while they are not currently as far along on the road to their American Dream as others [4.6], they feel they will ultimately get the furthest [8.7].

But the dreams of the young are different from those of older Americans, implying The American Dream itself continues to evolve. Upward mobility — doing better than one's parents — is a central tenet of The American Dream. The survey finds, however, this is changing for younger Americans. Upward mobility is still considered an important element of The American Dream for those 45 and older [69%]. But for those under 45, who grew up in a more affluent environment than their parents, and for whom the economic realities of the last decade make upward mobility more difficult to achieve, doing better than one's parents is less important [55%].

There's additional evidence of the ways in which younger people — and their dreams — are adapting to the realities of life in the '80s. For a majority [51%] of those 45 to 64 years old, changes in the traditional family structure pose a severe threat to the future of The American Dream. Only one in three [34%] of those under 30, who grew up during the most rapid transformation of family structure in the nation's history, agrees this transformation threatens The American Dream.

The responses of America's youth suggest a possible explanation for the enduring nature of The American Dream. The dreams of the American people are not static; rather they are continuously regenerating themselves based on changes in attitudes and values, as well as changes in economic, technological and political realities.

7. The Future Of The American Dream

Despite the public's strong belief in The American Dream and a high degree of optimism about their ability to attain it, there is concern about the future. A 45% plurality believes that The American Dream is harder to attain today than in the past, and a 55% majority feels it will be even harder to attain a generation from now.

At first, these findings appear to contradict the finding that there are more opportunities today than in the past. If opportunity is a cornerstone of The American Dream and there are more opportunities today than in the past, why should The American Dream be harder to attain?

Part of the answer lies in the interpretation of "opportunity." When people think of opportunity, they have in mind economic or work opportunities. The belief that there are more of these opportunities today fits well with certain trends in the labor force. Consider the 20 million new jobs created in the past decade or the receding discrimination against women, blacks and other minorities.

But, remember, economic opportunity is only one part of The American Dream — and not necessarily the most important one. There is the quality-of-life or "spiritual" side, as well.

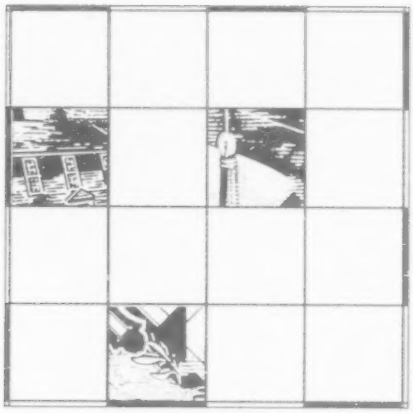
Perhaps the American people are suggesting it is more difficult to assure a high-quality standard of living in an increasingly complex society such as ours where the pace of social and technological change is accelerating.

Our society is still sorting out ways to incorporate such massive changes as the growth of two-income households and the microchip revolution. In this current state of flux, people feel they must work harder to achieve a "quality" lifestyle than was the case in simpler years.

What, in the future, might undermine The American Dream? Asked about 17 possible threats to The Dream, Americans' choices reflect a combination of today's dominant public issues, such as illegal drugs [79%] and crime [69%], along with some longer-term concerns, such as the declining quality of our educational system [66%] and of our environment [57%]. Economic trends, including the Federal deficit [57%], inflation [48%], declining productivity [47%], and foreign competition [41%] are also of concern to many.

It is important to note, however, these concerns have not deflated the American people's optimism about their ability to fulfill their own personal dreams. Such is the dichotomy between the outlook for the nation, about which we are uncertain, and our own personal prospects, about which we are bullish. Long-term concerns notwithstanding, the overall picture that emerges from the survey is one of high personal optimism about the belief in The American Dream.

Major Findings
Chapter 1:
The National Mood &
The American Dream



Major Findings
Chapter 1:
The National Mood &
The American Dream

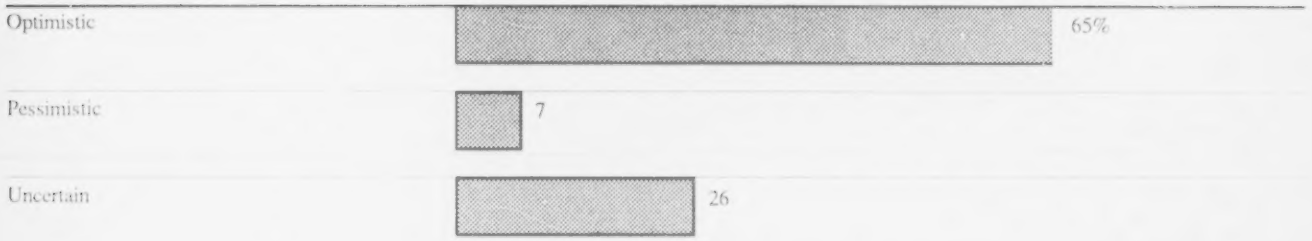
Chapter Introduction

This survey on The American Dream was conducted against a backdrop of strong optimism among the American people about their personal future. In contrast, Americans view the outlook for the ***nation*** *with somewhat more uncertainty, although by historical standards public optimism about the nation's future is relatively high.*

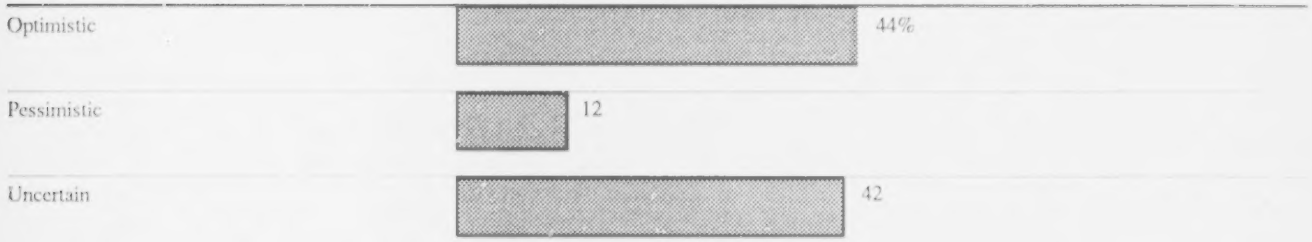
The dichotomy between people's views of their own personal future and the country's future provides one of the key foundations for understanding the public's strong belief in The American Dream which, as will be discussed later, the public defines in very personal terms. More specifically, the areas where the American people see the brightest future are those which are the most personal—their quality of life, their family's financial outlook, and their opportunities to get ahead.

There is evidence, however, of an underlying concern about the long-term future, particularly with respect to "the quality of life for the next generation." This is a recurring theme throughout the survey, suggesting that while Americans have recovered from their "malaise" of the late 1970s and early 1980s, their optimism is tempered by a realization that the future will bring with it difficult challenges, and that a better future is certainly possible, but by no means is it guaranteed.

Optimism/Pessimism About Personal Future [Q. 2b.]



Optimism/Pessimism About Country's Future [Q.2a.]



Personal Outlook

A two in three majority of the public [65%] say they are generally optimistic about the future, as far as they personally are concerned. Only 7% say they are generally pessimistic, while 26% say they are uncertain.

— Not surprisingly, personal optimism is highest among the upscale segments of the population—those from higher income households, those with some college education or more, and those in executive/professional or white collar positions.

— Respondents from the South and the West are the most optimistic; those from the Northeast are less so.

— And blacks are considerably less optimistic about their personal future than whites. The other side of the coin for blacks, however, is more uncertainty than pessimism.

Optimism/Pessimism About Personal Future [Q.2b.]

Numbers in table represent percentages.

	Generally Optimistic	Generally Pessimistic	Uncertain
Total Sample	65%	7%	26%
Sex			
Male	66	7	25
Female	64	6	27
Age			
18 to 29	69	4	25
30 to 44	63	7	28
45 to 64	67	8	22
65 and Over	56	7	31
Race			
White	67	6	25
Black	50	10	39
Household Income			
Under $15,000	49	8	39
$15,000 to Under $25,000	62	7	28
$25,000 to Under $50,000	72	6	21
$50,000 and Over	83	6	11
Geographic Area			
Northeast	59	7	31
Midwest	64	8	27
South	68	7	23
West	68	5	26
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	51	8	36
High School Graduate	60	7	31
Some College	77	6	16
College Graduate or More	79	5	15
Occupation			
Executive/Professional	78	2	19
White Collar	70	7	22
Blue Collar	56	8	32
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	55	11	26
Second Generation or More	66	6	26

Major Findings
Chapter 1:
The National Mood &
The American Dream

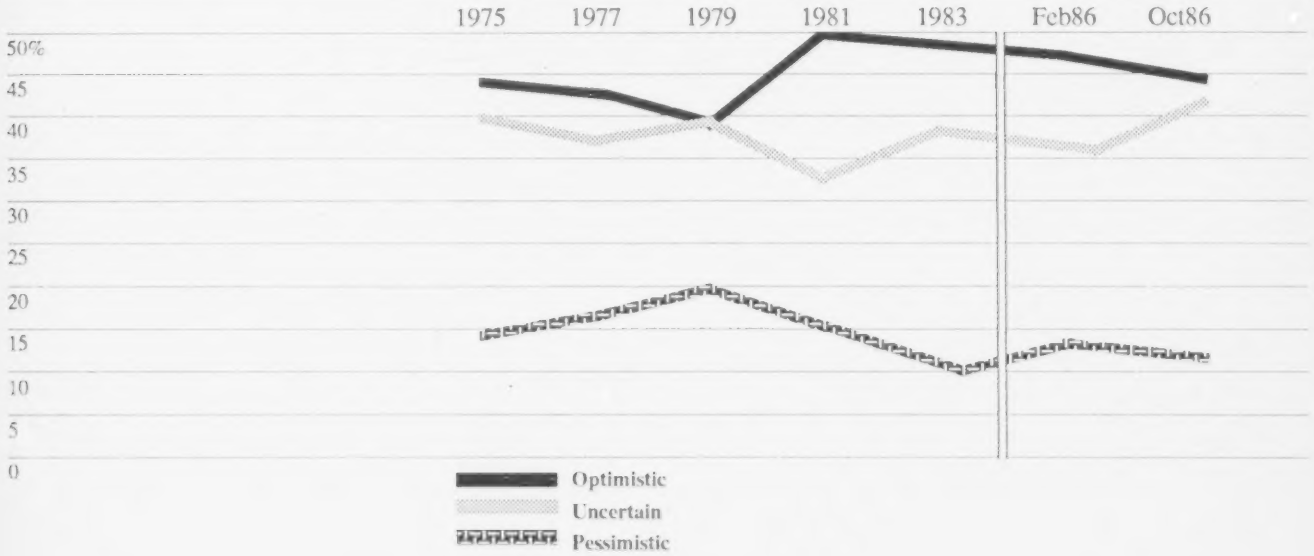
National Outlook

People's assessment of the country's future is not quite as optimistic as their assessment of their personal outlook. At the time of the poll [which was conducted prior to the controversy about selling arms to the Iranians and diverting the profits to the Nicaraguan Contra forces], only a plurality [44%] said they are generally optimistic about the future of the country, while almost as many [42%] said they are uncertain.

Optimism/Pessimism About Country's Future [Q.2a.]

Numbers in graph represent percentages.

Historical data drawn from Roper Reports syndicated research service.



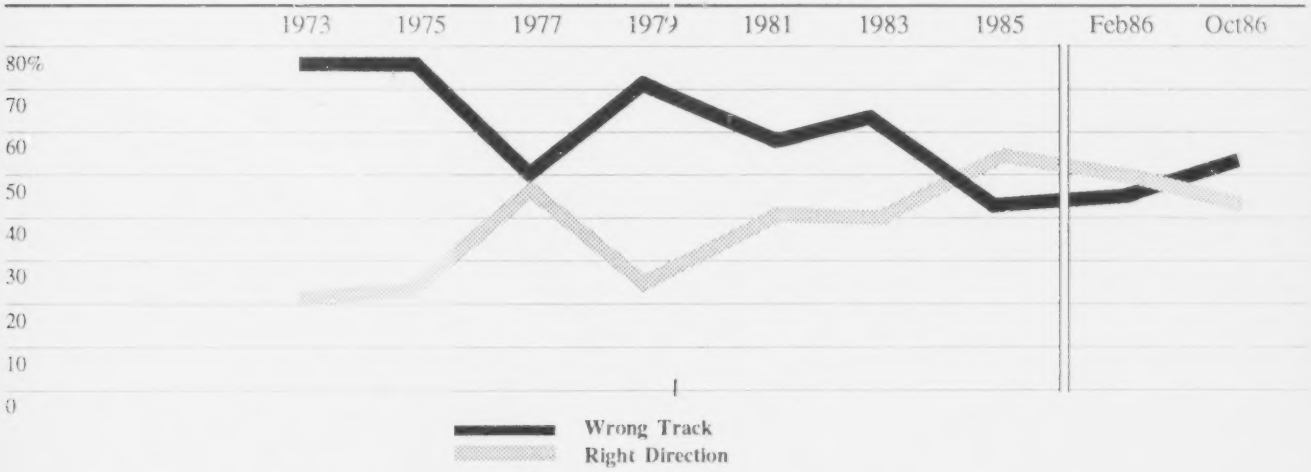
A similar finding is seen in a question which asked whether people feel America is headed in the right direction, or whether things have gotten off on the wrong track. Although the margin of difference is close [48% to 43%], a plurality feel that things are on the wrong track.

This view of the country's future, while not as ebullient as people's expectations about their own personal future, is nevertheless relatively strong by historical standards and remains much improved from the mood of the public in the 1970's.

The Way The Country Is Headed [Q.1.]

Numbers in graph represent percentages.

Historical data drawn from Roper Reports syndicated research service.



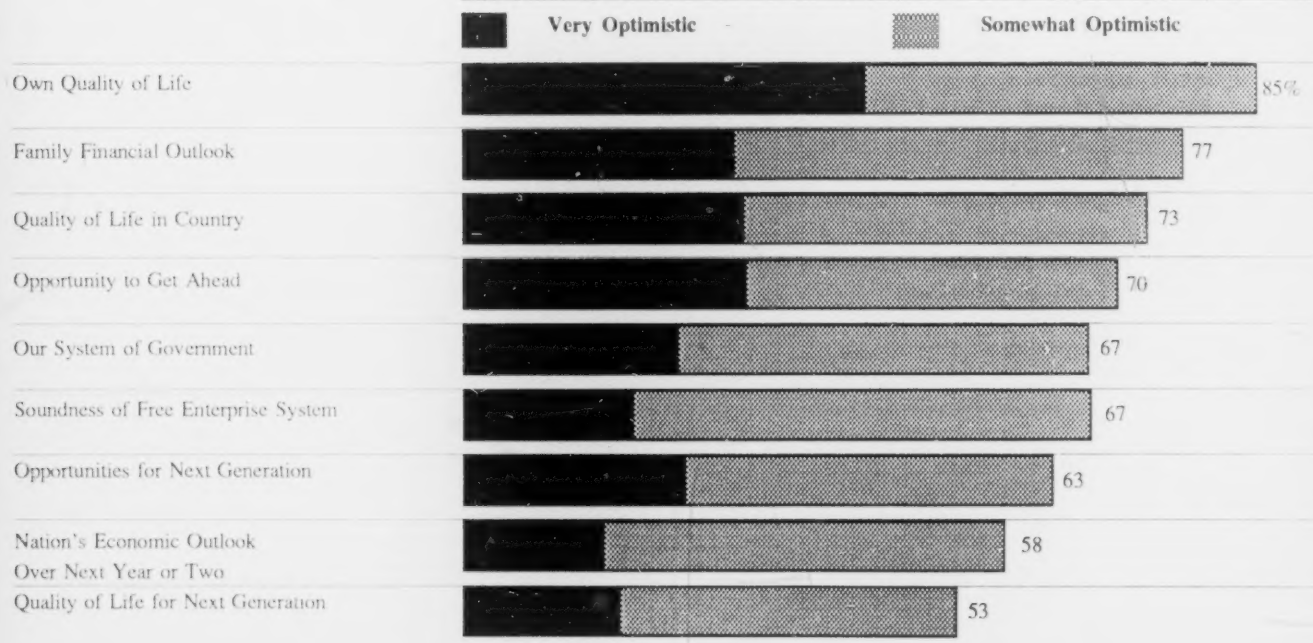
Outlook for the Future: A More Detailed Look

What, specifically, is the public most optimistic about? Stemming from the distinction which people make between their own individual future and the nation's future, we find the greatest degree of optimism about personal issues—people's "own quality of life" tops the list [cited by fully 85%], followed by their "family's financial outlook" [77%], "the quality of life in this country" [73%], and their personal opportunities "to get ahead" [70%].

There is somewhat less optimism about national matters—the long–term soundness of the free enterprise system [67%], our system of government and how well it works [67%], and the nation's near–term economic outlook [58%].

The area where the public is least optimistic [though not pessimistic] is "the quality of life for the next generation" [53% are optimistic; 39% are pessimistic]. This would appear to reflect an underlying uncertainty, evident throughout this study, about the country's long–term outlook.

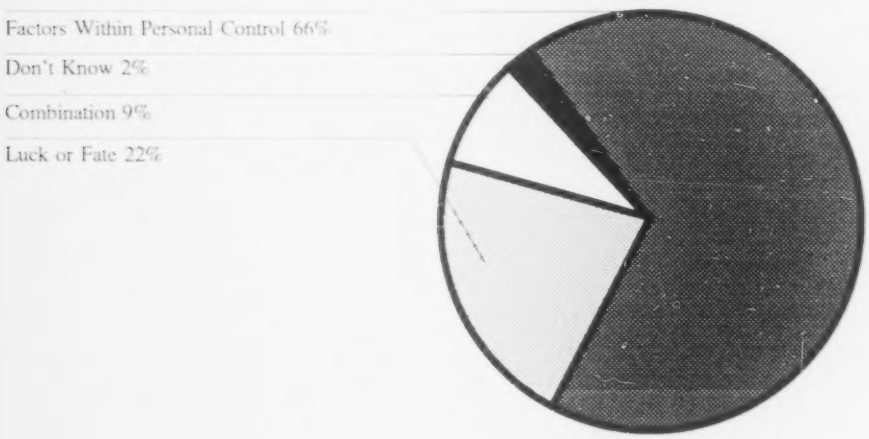
Degrees Of Optimism About Various Topics [Q.3.]



Determining One's Lot In Life

Closely related to one's outlook on the future is the feeling of control over what happens in one's life. Thus, the survey explored the extent to which Americans feel their lot in life is a matter of factors which are within their control, or whether luck or fate play the major role. Most Americans [66%], raised in a tradition which boasts that everyone is a captain of his fate, feel their destiny is within their control; fewer than 1 in 4 [22%] feel their life is or has been primarily determined by luck or fate. These findings are virtually the same as the results of a similar question posed in a 1972 Roper poll.

What Has Determined Your Lot In Life? [Q.8.]



Determining One's Lot In Life
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Not surprisingly, those who feel most strongly that they are in control of their life situation are those who are better off:

- Executives/professionals [76%]
- $25,000 or more annual household income [75%]
- Self–employed [74%]
- Some college [72%] or college graduate [74%]

In addition, men are somewhat more likely than women [71% vs. 62%] to feel in control of their lives.

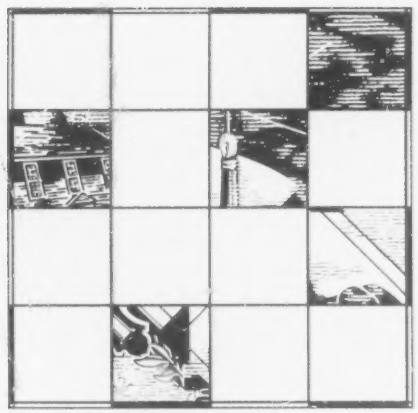
Those who are less likely than the total to feel in control are primarily those who are less well off:

- Blacks [49%]
- Under $15,000 annual household income [53%]
- Non–high school graduates [57%]
- Immigrants or first–generation Americans [61%]

A feeling of control over one's life has the following impact on one's outlook on the future:

- Those who feel in control are far more optimistic about their personal future than those who feel they are captives of luck or fate [70% vs. 50%].
- They are also more optimistic about the country's future [47% vs. 31%].
- And they are more optimistic when it comes to their opportunities to get ahead [73% vs. 62%].

Major Findings
Chapter 2:
America,
The Land of Opportunity



Major Findings
Chapter 2:
America, The Land of Opportunity

Chapter Introduction

Opportunity—for upward mobility, self-fulfillment, or to pursue one's goals—is a key underpinning of The American Dream. The survey explored this issue from two perspectives—one historical and one personal. First, respondents were asked to assess the level of opportunities in America today compared to the past. Second, they were asked to compare the level of opportunities available to them personally with those available for most other Americans.

The results indicate that despite numerous reports from experts about the struggle of today's middle class to "hold on" to the economic gains of the 1950s and 1960s, the American public continues to believe that there are generally more opportunities today than in the past. And, most people feel that they have at least the same level of opportunities as most other Americans.

However, there is a perception that the opportunity pie is not divided equally for all Americans, and that certain groups in society have fewer opportunities available to them than others.

Major Findings
Chapter 2:
America, The Land of Opportunity

Opportunities: Yesterday and Today

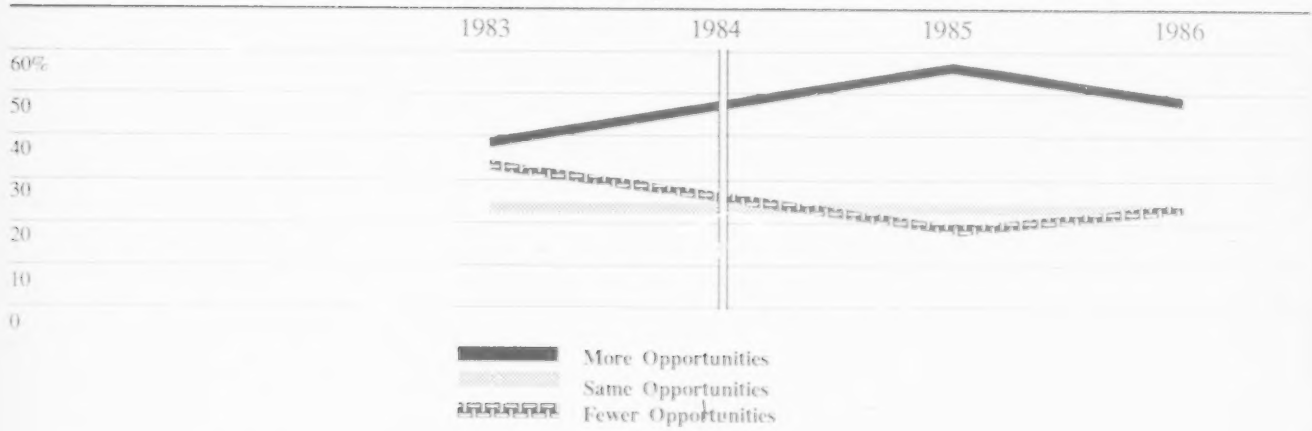
About half of the American public [49%] feels that there are more opportunities for Americans today than there were in the past. As recently as 1983, another Roper survey found that this figure stood at only 40%. About one-quarter of the public [26%] feels the opportunities are the same today as in the past, while a similar number [24%] feels there are fewer opportunities.

Opportunities for Americans Today, Compared to the Past [Q.5.]

Numbers in graph represent percentages.

Historical data drawn from Roper Reports syndicated research service.

In 1984, no data was gathered.



Opportunities: Yesterday and Today
[continued]

When the results of the total sample are looked at in greater detail, there are some interesting demographic differences. The most relevant, as seen in the table on page 29, are as follows:

- By age, we find that it is the youngest group in the sample that see the greatest opportunities: A 56% majority of respondents in the18 to 29 age group feels there are more opportunities today, compared with 47% among the 30 to 44 year olds, and 43% among the 45 to 64 year olds. This figure then jumps back up to 52% among the 65 and older group.

  In fact, throughout the survey the young express the greatest optimism about the opportunities to get ahead and, indeed, their ability to achieve their American Dream. Perhaps this is a reflection of youthful exuberance, which will diminish with age, or perhaps it reflects a new generation's sense of expanding opportunities and choices.

- Differences also emerge on the basis of education. Only 41% of those with less than a high school education feel there are more opportunities today, compared with 52% among those who graduated from high school and 56% among those who attended college; however, this figure drops sharply to 45% among those with a college degree or more education.

Opportunities: Yesterday and Today
[continued]

At first this seems to be somewhat incongruous, as one would expect those with the highest level of education to have the most opportunities. And,in fact, we will see in the next section of the report that college graduates do, indeed, feel that they personally have more opportunities than most other Americans. Why then, when asked to assess opportunities in America today compared to the past, do only a minority of college graduates feel there are more opportunities today?

The answer is perhaps found when we compare the background of the college educated with the rest of the sample. Among the total sample, 66% say their fathers held a blue collar job, while 31% say their fathers held a white collar or executive/professional job; among the college educated, the reverse is true with 56% saying their fathers had white collar or executive/professional jobs and only 43% saying their fathers have blue collar jobs. Similarly, nearly half [48%] of the college graduates have a mother or father who also attended college, compared to only half that many [24%] among the total sample.

Opportunities: Yesterday and Today
[continued]

It would appear, then, that people's perspectives on the level of opportunities today compared with the past are heavily determined by their background. As people are working their way up the social and economic ladder, they feel that there are more opportunities than in the past. More college graduates,however, have [or had] parents who were relatively well educated and held high status jobs. Therefore, in relation to their parents, the opportunities in America today are about the same as in the past, but not better.

— Women [55%] see more opportunities today than men [43%].

— Blacks, who we saw earlier are less optimistic about their future than whites, nevertheless are as inclined as whites to say there are more opportunities for Americans today than in the past.

— However, only 1 in 3 [36%] recent arrivals to the country feel there are better opportunities today than in the past; an equal number feel there are fewer opportunities. Perhaps this reflects a lack of historical perspective.
Or perhaps their expectations about America have not been fulfilled.

Opportunities for Americans Today Compared to the Past [Q.6.]

Numbers in the table represent percentages.

	More Opportunities Today	Fewer Opportunities Today	About the Same
Total Sample	**49%**	**24%**	**26%**
Sex			
Male	43	27	29
Female	55	20	23
Age			
18 to 29	56	21	22
30 to 44	47	26	27
45 to 64	43	25	31
65 and Over	52	22	23
Race			
White	49	23	27
Black	52	28	18
Household Income			
Under $15,000	47	24	27
$15,000 to Under $25,000	49	24	27
$25,000 to Under $50,000	47	27	25
$50,000 and Over	52	19	29
Geographic Area			
Northeast	50	26	23
Midwest	45	25	29
South	54	19	25
West	45	26	27
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	41	29	27
High School Graduate	52	22	25
Some College	56	20	23
College Graduate or More	45	24	30
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	36	36	26
Second Generation or More	51	22	26
Political/Social Philosophy			
Conservative	52	21	26
Moderate	48	25	26
Liberal	43	29	27

Slicing the Opportunity Pie

A clear majority of Americans [61%] believe they have the **same** level of opportunities as most other Americans. Among the remainder, nearly 3 in 10 believe they have **more** opportunities available to them, while only 1 in 10 believe they have **fewer** opportunities.

- Again, the youngest age cohort is the most bullish in its outlook, with 36% among the 18 to 29 year olds expressing the opinion that they have more opportunities than other Americans.

- Other demographic groups which are the most likely to hold this view are the affluent, the better educated, and those in executive/professional or white collar jobs.

- Interestingly, while liberals were seen earlier to be less likely than conservatives to feel there are more opportunities in the **country** today than in the past, they are more likely to feel that they **personally** have greater opportunities than most Americans.

- Blacks are nearly two-and-a-half times as likely as whites [22% vs. 9%] to feel that they have fewer opportunities than other Americans.

- Immigrants or first generation Americans are twice as likely as those whose families have been here two generations or more [18% vs. 9%] to feel that they have fewer opportunities.

Personal Opportunities Compared to Most Americans [Q.7.]

Numbers in table represent percentages.

	More Opportunities	Fewer Opportunities	About the Same
Total Sample	**28%**	**10%**	**61%**
Sex			
Male	31	10	58
Female	26	11	63
Age			
18 to 29	**36**	7	57
30 to 44	27	13	59
45 to 64	24	11	65
65 and Over	23	10	63
Race			
White	29	9	62
Black	19	**22**	57
Household Income			
Under $15,000	22	**18**	59
$15,000 to Under $25,000	24	8	67
$25,000 to Under $50,000	30	6	63
$50,000 and Over	**52**	7	41
Geographic Area			
Northeast	35	10	54
Midwest	28	11	60
South	24	9	66
West	27	12	60
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	18	14	68
High School Graduate	24	11	64
Some College	31	9	59
College Graduate or More	**47**	6	46
Occupation			
Executive/Professional	**38**	8	54
White Collar	**34**	9	57
Blue Collar	26	11	63
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	27	**18**	54
Second Generation or More	28	9	62
Political/Social Philosophy			
Conservative	27	8	64
Moderate	23	15	61
Liberal	**36**	11	52

Slicing the Opportunity Pie
[continued]

Despite the fact that most people feel, as individuals, that they have the same or more opportunities as most other Americans, there is a clear belief that the country does not, as yet, offer equal opportunities for all Americans. In fact, fully 2 in 3 respondents believe that some groups in society have fewer opportunities available to them than others; only 30% feel that there are equal opportunities for all.

Topping the list of those thought to have fewer opportunities are the disabled, cited by nearly 3 out of 4 respondents. This is clearly a recognition of the physical barriers which confront this group.

About half of the public feels that there are fewer opportunities for recent immigrants, homosexuals and Hispanics. Four in ten feel this way about blacks, while 1 in 3 feel that Asian–Americans and women have fewer opportunities.

— While men and women generally agree in their assessments of the opportunities available to various groups, they differ in two interesting respects. Women are more likely than men [39% to 26%] to feel that women as a group have fewer opportunities [although we saw earlier that most women don't feel that they **personally** have fewer opportunities]; men are somewhat more likely than women [56% to 49%] to feel that homosexuals have fewer opportunities.

— And, a 59% majority of blacks feel that blacks [as a group] have fewer opportunities than other Americans, compared to only 41% among the total public. Blacks are also somewhat more likely than the total public [40% to 33%] to feel that women have fewer opportunities.

Groups Which Have Fewer Opportunities Than Other Americans [Q. 9b.]

Numbers in the table represent percentages.

	All Respondents	Blacks	Women	Men
The Disabled	72%	74%	71%	72%
Recent Immigrants	53	47	55	52
Homosexuals	52	51	49	**56**
Hispanics	49	54	48	51
Blacks	41	**59**	40	41
Asian Americans	34	32	33	35
Women	33	**40**	**39**	26
Blue Collar Workers	27	26	27	26
Middle Class Americans	16	19	18	15

Employment:
Where Do Opportunities Lie?

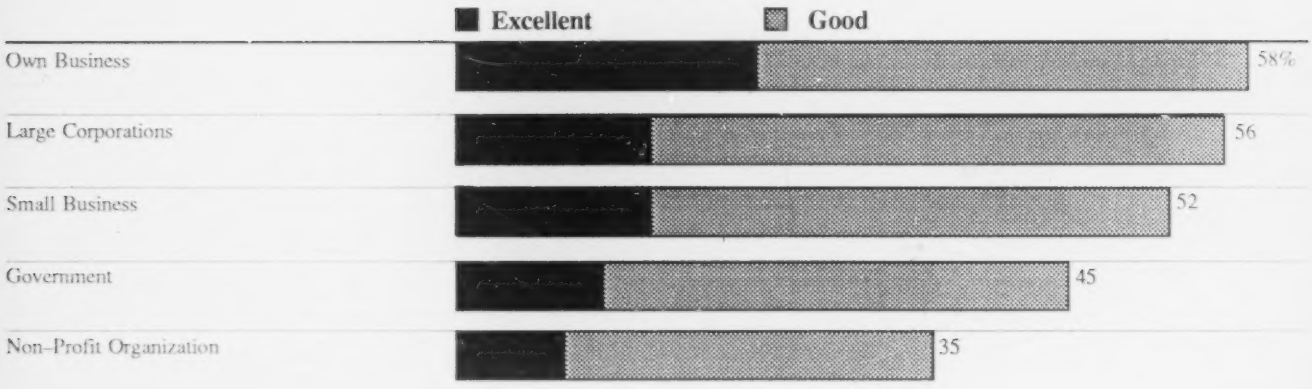
The entrepreneurial spirit which has swept the country is evident here. Asked to evaluate the opportunities to get ahead in various places of employment, the public gives the highest rating to a business of one's own, with 22% saying the opportunities to get ahead are excellent and 36% saying they are good.

Given the common wisdom about anti–big business sentiment among the public, it may be somewhat surprising to see that large corporations were rated second [14% say the opportunities to get ahead are excellent; 42% say they are good]. In fact, however, this is in keeping with a consistently favorable rating of "most large corporations" found in Roper tracking studies about attitudes toward business.

Small businesses follow closely behind large corporations [14% - excellent; 38% - good]. Government agencies receive a somewhat lower rating [11% - excellent; 34% - good], while non–profit organizations finish in a distant last place [8% - excellent; 27% - good].

Opportunities to Get Ahead in Various Places of Work [Q. 7.]

Numbers on chart represent percentages.



This general pattern holds true for each of the various demographic subgroups, with certain exceptions. These are as follows:

— College graduates rate large corporations as the best place to get ahead, while those with some college favor a business of their own or small businesses.

— Residents of the Northeast give the highest rating to big business. Southerners express the strongest belief that opportunities lie in one's own business.

— Younger respondents feel most strongly that the opportunities to get ahead are best in their own businesses. Older respondents are more likely than other age groups to see good opportunities in government jobs.

— Blacks, more than whites, believe there are excellent or good opportunities to get ahead in government jobs. Conversely, blacks are less likely than whites to feel there are good opportunities to get ahead in small businesses.

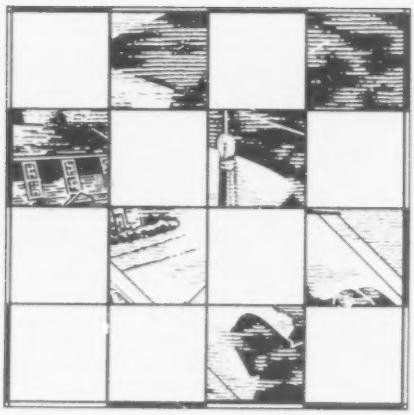
— Women, more than men, feel there are opportunties to get ahead in non–profit organizations. This view is also held more by residents of the Northeast than by residents of other regions.

Opportunities to Get Ahead in Various Places of Work [Q. 7.]

Numbers in the table represent percentages.

	Opportunities to Get Ahead are Excellent/Good in:				
	One's Own Business	Large Corporations	Small Business	Government	Non-Profit Organizations
Total Sample	**58%**	**56%**	**52%**	**45%**	**35%**
Sex					
Male	60	55	54	44	31
Female	57	57	51	45	**39**
Age					
18 to 29	**64**	57	54	45	35
30 to 44	61	57	53	44	38
45 to 64	52	54	48	42	34
65 and Over	55	55	54	**51**	33
Race					
White	59	56	53	44	36
Black	58	57	45	**54**	34
Household Income					
Under $15,000	52	54	50	**51**	37
$15,000 to Under $25,000	55	56	50	44	35
$25,000 to Under $50,000	63	53	56	43	35
$50,000 and Over	**72**	**69**	59	32	36
Geographic Area					
Northeast	58	**61**	57	44	**43**
Midwest	55	53	52	45	33
South	**62**	56	53	46	33
West	57	54	46	41	33
Education					
Non-High School Graduate	48	57	43	46	34
High School Graduate	58	52	51	47	34
Some College	**68**	55	60	46	37
College Graduate or More	62	**64**	57	37	37
Occupation					
Executive/Professional	62	60	57	37	35
White Collar	61	59	54	48	36
Blue Collar	54	53	49	46	35
Self-Employed	**66**	46	**59**	37	37
Employed by Someone Else	57	59	52	45	34
Generation American					
Immigrant or First Generation	56	61	**59**	48	**47**
Second Generation or More	59	55	51	44	34

Major Findings
Chapter 3:
The State of
The American Dream



Chapter Introduction

Virtually all Americans feel The American Dream is alive—either "very much" [32%] or "somewhat" [54%]. Furthermore, more than 2 in 3 Americans feel their American Dream has personal meaning.

For most, The American Dream is defined in fairly classic terms—an education for themselves and their children, owning a home, and freedom of choice in how they choose to live. Dreams of becoming wealthy are not of prime importance to most Americans in the context of other elements; however, financial security—as distinct from wealth—is important. And upward mobility, once considered a central tenet of The American Dream, remains important to older Americans, but less so to the younger generations.

Closely tied to their definition of The American Dream is the public's idea about what it means to be successful. Here again, things which are non-material are considered most important—family and friends, being one of the best at the job one does, and being well-educated. Power and influence, wealth, and fame finish last on the list.

And who do Americans feel best personifies The American Dream? What is most striking, perhaps, is that no one person stands out in people's minds as **the** *personification of The American Dream. Nevertheless, more than anyone else, people mention a member of their family, giving a further indication of the extent to which the public views The American Dream in very personal terms. Beyond family, John F. Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln are named most frequently.*

Major Findings
Chapter 3:
The State of The American Dream

Is The American Dream Alive?

The American Dream is clearly alive, in the minds of an overwhelming 86% majority of the public. About 1 in 3 [32%] feel it is "very much" alive, while slightly more than half [54%] say it is "somewhat alive"; only about 1 in 10 Americans [11%] say The American Dream is "not really alive."

Subgroups most likely to believe that The American Dream is "very much alive" include:

- Men more than women
- Whites more than blacks
- Upper–income households
- Residents of the South
- Those with at least some college education
- Political conservatives
- Those who are self–employed

Is the American Dream Alive? [Q.10.]
The numbers in the table represent percentages.

	Very Much	Somewhat	Not Really
Total Sample	**32%**	**54%**	**11%**
Sex			
Male	**37**	51	10
Female	28	57	11
Age			
18 to 29	31	57	11
30 to 44	31	55	12
45 to 64	31	56	10
65 and Over	35	46	10
Race			
White	33	54	9
Black	21	**58**	**19**
Household Income			
Under $15,000	30	53	15
$15,000 to Under $25,000	28	59	10
$25,000 to Under $50,000	34	55	8
$50,000 and Over	**41**	47	10
Geographic Area			
Northeast	29	56	11
Midwest	29	57	11
South	**36**	51	9
West	33	55	11
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	28	54	12
High School Graduate	30	57	11
Some College	**37**	52	8
College Graduate or More	35	53	10
Occupation			
Executive/Professional	35	53	11
White Collar	35	54	11
Blue Collar	29	58	11
Self–Employed	**40**	48	9
Employed by Someone Else	31	56	11
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	27	55	9
Second Generation or More	33	55	11
Political/Social Philosophy			
Conservative	**36**	51	9
Moderate	30	60	8
Liberal	26	57	**15**

Does The American Dream Have Meaning?

For more than 2 in 3 Americans [68%], The American Dream has personal meaning. Among the remainder, 16% say The American Dream has meaning to others but not to them, while 13% feel that The American Dream is just a phrase which doesn't really have meaning to anyone.

This general pattern holds true for all segments of the population. In fact, a 6 in 10 majority or more in every demographic group feel The American Dream has personal meaning. Nevertheless, there are some differences in degree.

Groups which are most likely to feel that The American Dream has personal meaning include upper–income households [73%], residents of the South [73%] and West [74%], and those with some college education [73%].

College graduates [as distinct from those with only some college education] and those in executive or professional positions are somewhat more likely than the total population to feel that The American Dream has meaning to others but not to them—although 2 in 3 among both groups still feel The American Dream has personal meaning. Perhaps this suggests that the personal importance of The American Dream as a symbol of aspirations, hopes, and opportunity for advancement begins to diminish somewhat once people have attained a high educational and occupational status. However, these groups do not deny that The American Dream has meaning to others.

Groups which are more likely than the total sample to say that The American Dream "is just a phrase which doesn't really have meaning to anyone" are blacks, older Americans [those 65 and older], and residents of the Midwest.

	The American Dream Has: [Q.3.]		
	Meaning to Me	Meaning to Others	No Meaning to Anyone
Total Sample	**68%**	**16%**	**13%**
Sex			
Male	68	15	14
Female	68	17	13
Age			
18 to 29	69	18	12
30 to 44	68	16	14
45 to 64	69	15	12
65 and Over	66	13	17
Race			
White	68	16	13
Black	61	16	20
Household Income			
Under $15,000	64	18	15
$15,000 to Under $25,000	68	14	16
$25,000 to Under $50,000	69	16	12
$50,000 and Over	73	19	8
Geographic Area			
Northeast	62	20	15
Midwest	63	18	17
South	73	12	13
West	74	17	8
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	67	13	16
High School Graduate	67	16	15
Some College	73	16	9
College Graduate or More	65	20	12
Occupation			
Executive/Professional	66	21	11
White Collar	70	17	12
Blue Collar	70	14	14
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	70	15	10
Second Generation or More	68	16	14
Political/Social Philosophy			
Conservative	69	16	12
Moderate	68	16	14
Liberal	66	17	14

Defining The American Dream

If, then, The American Dream has personal meaning to most Americans, what exactly does The American Dream mean? To find out, we presented respondents with ten possible ingredients of The American Dream and asked for each, is this "very much" what they understand The American Dream to mean, or "sort of" what it means, or "not" what it means? For most of the public, the classic definition still pertains—an education for themselves and their children, owning a home, and freedom of choice in how they choose to live. Dreams of becoming wealthy or following in the footsteps of Horatio Alger, however, are less important elements of The American Dream for most people.

Even as the number of Americans who have completed four years of high school or more continues to increase at a sharp pace [Census data indicate that as of 1983, 72% of adults ages 25 and over completed high school, up sharply from only 52% in 1970], our survey finds that people do not belittle what many might consider to be basic education. In fact, the ability to get a high school education emerges as the number one ingredient of The American Dream, with 84% saying this is "very much" what The American Dream means to them.

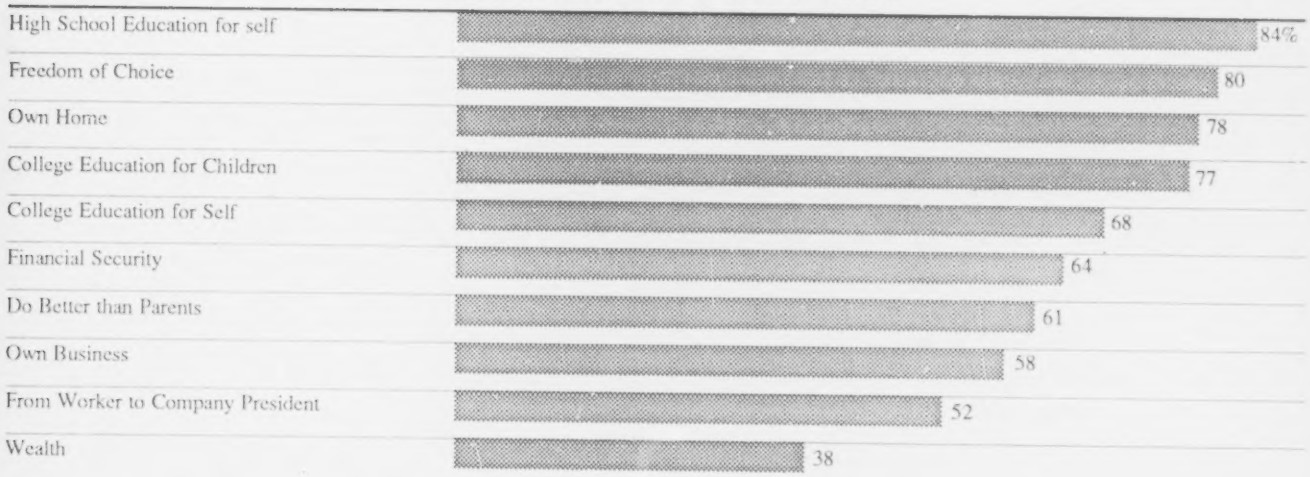
This is followed by freedom of choice in how to live one's life [80%], owning a home [78%], and being able to send one's children to college [77%]. Slightly fewer [68%] feel a college education for themselves is an integral part of their definition of The American Dream.

To do better than one's parents, and to be able to start a business of one's own are considered to be very much a part of The American Dream by about 6 in 10 Americans.

Financial security is important for nearly 2 in 3 [64%], but only 4 in 10 [38%] feel that the ability to become wealthy is very much a part of The American Dream. About half of the American people [52%] define The American Dream as being able to rise from clerk or factory worker to president of the company.

Definitions of The American Dream [Q.11.]

The numbers in the chart represent percentage of respondents who say this is "very much" what they understand The American Dream to mean.



Defining The American Dream
[continued]

Looking at the results of various subgroups, we find the following differences:

— A high school education is considered slightly more important for people in the 45 to 64 [88%] and 65 and older [86%] age groups than for people between the ages of 30 and 44 [83%] or 18 to 29 [81%]. This suggests, perhaps, that as high school education becomes more universal, it may become a somewhat less important element of The American Dream.

— To be able to send one's children to college is cited most frequently as an important part of The American Dream by those 65 years and older [for whom it is the number one answer, mentioned by 87%]. It is cited least frequently by those who are self–employed [69%] even though members of this group are, in fact, better educated than the public as a whole. Perhaps the entrepreneurs are sending a message that from their perspective, at least, it takes more than education to get ahead and fulfill one's dreams.

— To be able to get a college education for one's self is cited most frequently by blacks [77%], and least frequently [again] by those who are self–employed [60%]. It is mentioned more often by women [72%] than men [64%].

— Having freedom of choice in how to live one's life increases in importance as people become more affluent. Thus, it is a more important part of The American Dream for upper income households [84% among respondents with $25,000 or more household income] than for those with lower incomes [77% among respondents with less than $25,000 household income], and more important for whites [82%] than for blacks [68%]; it is also important for those with at least some college education [86%]; and for those in executive or professional jobs, among whom it is the number one answer [86%].

— To do better than one's parents was traditionally considered a cornerstone of American values. But for younger Americans this is now changing. Upward mobility is still considered a very important element of The American Dream for those 45 and over [69%], but less so for the 30 to 44 age group [58%] and their younger [18 to 29 year old] siblings [52%], who grew up in a more affluent environment than their parents and for whom the economic realities of the last decade perhaps make upward mobility a more difficult dream to achieve.

— For groups which have traditionally been less well–off, however, upward mobility remains an important goal. Thus, doing better than their parents is a more important part of The American Dream for blacks [68%] than for whites [60%], and for immigrants or first–generation Americans [66%] than for those who are second–generation or more [60%].

— To be able to start a business of one's own is cited most frequently as a part of The American Dream—not surprisingly—by those who are self–employed [71%].

— To be able to become wealthy is thought to be very much a part of The American Dream most often by men [44%, compared to 34% among women], those in the West [44%], those with an annual household income of $50,000 or more [44%], and those with some college education [44%].

What It Means To Succeed

Closely related to the question of what The American Dream means is the question of what it means to be successful. And again, the most important elements of success are not material in nature, but rather those relating to the family—being a good parent and having a happy marriage are at the top of the list, both cited by over 9 in 10 Americans.

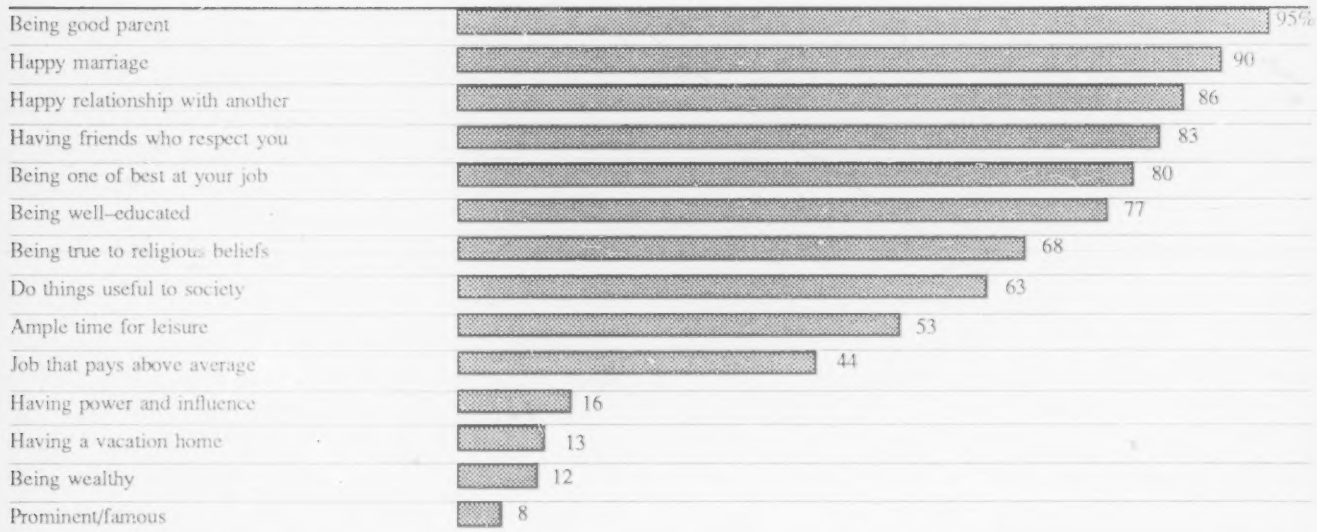
About 8 in 10 also include having friends who respect them, being one of the best at the job they do and being well–educated as very important elements in their definition of success. And between half and two–thirds of the American public feel success includes being true to their religious convictions, making or doing things which contribute to society, and having ample time for leisure.

Having a job that pays more than average is considered to be a very important part of what it means to be successful for only 44% of the total population. However, this increases to 68% among blacks, 54% among those with household incomes of under $15,000 per year, 54% among immigrants or first generation Americans, and 51% among non–high school graduates.

Fewer than 1 in 6 Americans consider power and influence, wealth, or prominence/fame to be very important elements in their personal definition of success.

Very Important Elements of Success [Q.4.]

The numbers in the graph represent percentage of respondents who say this is a "very important" element of their idea of success.



The American Dream Personified

In an effort to add further understanding to the public's definition of what The American Dream means, we asked respondents to tell us, in their own words, what individual [either living or dead, famous or not famous] they feel best exemplifies their idea of The American Dream.

The results give a further indication of the extent to which the public views The American Dream in very personal terms. More than anyone else, people say a member of their family, either their father [mentioned by 5%] or another family member [6%] typify their idea of The American Dream.

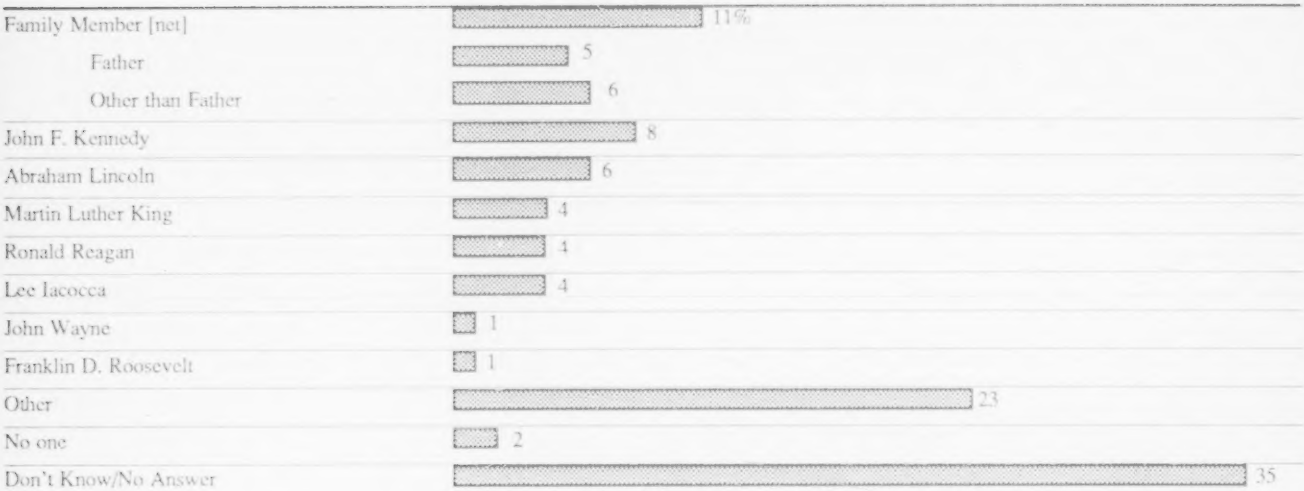
But it is clear there is no one person who stands out in the public's mind. In fact, more than 1 in 3 Americans say they do not know who exemplifies their idea of The American Dream.

Beyond family, the public names John F. Kennedy [8%] and Abraham Lincoln [6%] most frequently. As Presidents of the United States, both of these men achieved visible success. But they are also both individuals who articulated an optimistic and hopeful vision of American society. Perhaps it is their vision—more than the achievements of the individuals themselves—which the public feels exemplifies The American Dream.

Following Presidents Kennedy and Lincoln are five other men, all of whom share the common characteristics of being strong and independent individuals. Martin Luther King, Ronald Reagan and Lee Iacocca each receive mentions from 4% of the public. John Wayne and Franklin D. Roosevelt are mentioned by 1% each.

Who Best Exemplifies The American Dream [Q. 12.]

The numbers in the chart represent percentages.



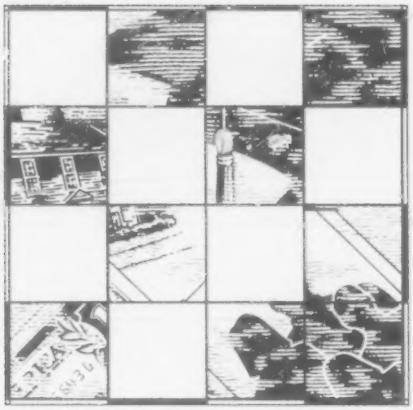
This question, more than any other which has been discussed so far in this report, reveals broad differences among various subgroups in the population. For example:

— As many as 19% of Americans under the age of 30 feel that members of their family typify The American Dream, compared to 11% in the total population. Family members are also an important symbol of The American Dream to self-employed individuals [17%].

— Among blacks, fully 1 in 3 [33%] say that Martin Luther King typifies The American Dream for them.

— For low income Americans, John Kennedy [13%] stands out even more than family members [10%]; for the affluent, Lee Iacocca is tied at number one with family members [both mentioned by 9%].

Major Findings
Chapter 4:
The Road to
The American Dream



Major Findings
Chapter 4:
The Road to The American Dream

Chapter Introduction

As we have just seen, Americans uniformly agree that The American Dream is alive, and most agree that it is not just a phrase but rather is a concept which has personal meaning for them. This chapter looks at where the American public places itself currently on the road to The American Dream, and how far people feel they will ultimately get.

The results show Americans, on average, to be more than halfway along on the road to their American Dream, and highly optimistic that they will ultimately attain [or come close to attaining] their American Dream. This is probably a reflection of the fact that most people define The American Dream in terms of goals which are not unreachable. An education for one's self and one's children, freedom of choice in how to live, and owning a home—these are all goals which are realistic for most Americans.

Where Are We Now?

To begin with, we asked the public to tell us where they feel they currently stand on the road to The American Dream, however they personally define it. On a 10–point scale, with 1 representing the starting point and 10 meaning they have already achieved their American Dream, the average response is 5.8, just beyond the mid–point.*

As might be expected, this figure correlates directly with age, with 18 to 29 year olds placing themselves at the 4.6 point and those 65 and older placing themselves at the 7.0 point [30 to 44 year olds and 45 to 64 year olds stand in between—at 5.8 and 6.5, respectively]. But what is surprising is that every other demographic subgroup—whites and blacks, rich and poor, blue collar and white collar, recent Americans as well as those who have been here for two generations or more—place themselves beyond 5.0 on the road to their American Dream.

* Note: The questions on the road to The American Dream [presented in this chapter] and those on the future of The American Dream [presented in Chapter 6] were asked only of those who feel The American Dream has meaning [1433 people].These questions were not asked of the small minority of people [13% of the sample or 201 people] who feel The American Dream is only a phrase which doesn't have meaning to anyone.

Current Position on the Road to The American Dream [Q.15.]

Numbers represent average ratings on scale of 1 to 10.

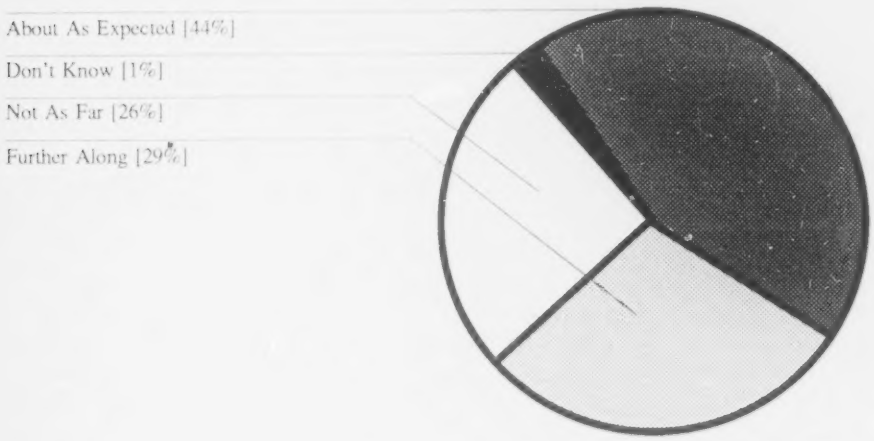
	Current Position
Total Sample	5.8
Sex	
Male	5.7
Female	5.9
Age	
18 to 29	4.6
30 to 44	5.8
45 to 64	6.5
65 and Over	7.0
Race	
White	5.8
Black	5.4
Household Income	
Under $15,000	5.2
$15,000 to Under $25,000	5.6
$25,000 to Under $50,000	6.0
$50,000 and Over	6.5
Geographic Area	
Northeast	5.5
Midwest	5.8
South	5.9
West	5.8
Education	
Non–High School Graduate	5.6
High School Graduate	5.7
Some College	5.6
College Graduate or More	6.4
Occupation	
Executive/Professional	5.9
White Collar	5.7
Blue Collar	5.2
Self–Employed	6.0
Employed by Someone Else	5.5
Generation American	
Immigrant or First Generation	5.9
Second Generation or More	5.8

Have We Met Our Expectations?

For a 44% plurality of the public, their position on the road to The American Dream meets the expectation they had set for themselves five years ago. About 3 in 10 [29%] are further along than expected, while almost the same number [26%] are not as far along as they thought they would be.

Those who are not as far along as they expected to be are not, however, very far behind. This group places itself at the 4.9 point on the road to The American Dream, compared to 6.2 among those who are further along than expected and 6.1 among those who are just about where they expected they would be.

Position on the Road to The American Dream, Compared to Expectations [Q. 16.]



How Far Will We Get?

Having indicated where they feel they are on the road to The American Dream at the present time, respondents were asked to assess how far along they feel they will **ultimately** get.

Once again, a 10–point scale was used where 1 means they won't get beyond the starting point and 10 means they will reach their American Dream. This time, the average response is 8.2. This figure clearly indicates that despite dour predictions by "the experts," the American people remain upbeat and optimistic about their ability to achieve The American Dream. While this figure is remarkably high, in its own right, it is perhaps even more surprising that this optimism is so widespread throughout the population. In fact, **every** subgroup in the population feels it will get to at least the 7.4 mark.

- For example, those who say they are presently starting out on their road to The American Dream [a 1, 2, 3, or 4 rating] feel they will ultimately reach the 7.6 point.

- Those who are not currently as far along as they had expected feel they will eventually reach the 7.8 mark.

- Young people [ages 18 to 29], who are the least far along at present, expect to get to the 8.7 point, further than any other demographic group [except the very affluent, who expect to reach the 8.9 point]. This appears to be a further indication of the degree of optimism and confidence among the younger generation.

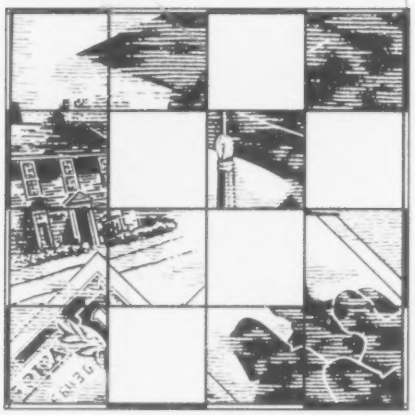
- Blacks expect to get slightly further than whites [8.4 versus 8.2].

Expectations Regarding the Ultimate Position on the Road to The American Dream [Q. 15 and 17.]

The numbers in the table represent average ratings on a scale of 1 to 10.

	Current Position	Ultimate Position	Difference
Total Sample	**5.8**	**8.2**	**+2.4**
Sex			
Male	5.7	8.2	+2.5
Female	5.9	8.2	+2.3
Age			
18 to 29	4.6	8.7	+4.1
30 to 44	5.8	8.5	+2.7
45 to 64	6.5	7.9	+1.4
65 and Over	7.0	7.4	+0.4
Race			
White	5.8	8.2	+2.4
Black	5.4	8.4	+3.0
Household Income			
Under $15,000	5.2	7.5	+2.3
$15,000 to Under $25,000	5.6	8.2	+2.6
$25,000 to Under $50,000	6.0	8.4	+2.4
$50,000 and Over	6.5	8.9	+2.4
Geographic Area			
Northeast	5.5	7.9	+2.4
Midwest	5.8	8.3	+2.5
South	5.9	8.2	+2.3
West	5.8	8.5	+2.7
Education			
Non–High School Graduate	5.6	7.5	+1.9
High School Graduate	5.7	8.2	+2.5
Some College	5.6	8.6	+3.0
College Graduate or More	6.4	8.7	+2.3
Occupation			
Executive/Professional	5.9	8.5	+2.6
White Collar	5.7	8.6	+2.9
Blue Collar	5.2	8.2	+3.0
Self–Employed	6.0	8.5	+2.5
Employed by Someone Else	5.5	8.3	+2.8
Generation American			
Immigrant or First Generation	5.9	7.8	+1.9
Second Generation or More	5.8	8.3	+2.5
Current Position on the Road to The American Dream			
Starting Out [1 - 4]	3.1	7.6	+4.5
Midway [5 - 7]	5.8	8.1	+2.3
Almost there/there [8 - 10]	8.6	9.2	+0.6

Major Findings
Chapter 5:
What Does
The American Dream Cost?



Major Findings
Chapter 5:
What Does
The American Dream Cost?

Chapter Introduction

Earlier in this report, we saw that when thinking about The American Dream and what it means to be successful, wealth takes a back seat to non-materialistic values such as family, education, and owning a home.

To find out exactly what their financial needs and hopes are, we asked the public to estimate how much income per year they feel they [and their families] would need under various conditions—just to get by, to live in reasonable comfort, and to fulfill all their dreams. The results indicate that Americans have rather modest expectations, which may help to explain why so many people feel The American Dream is within reach.

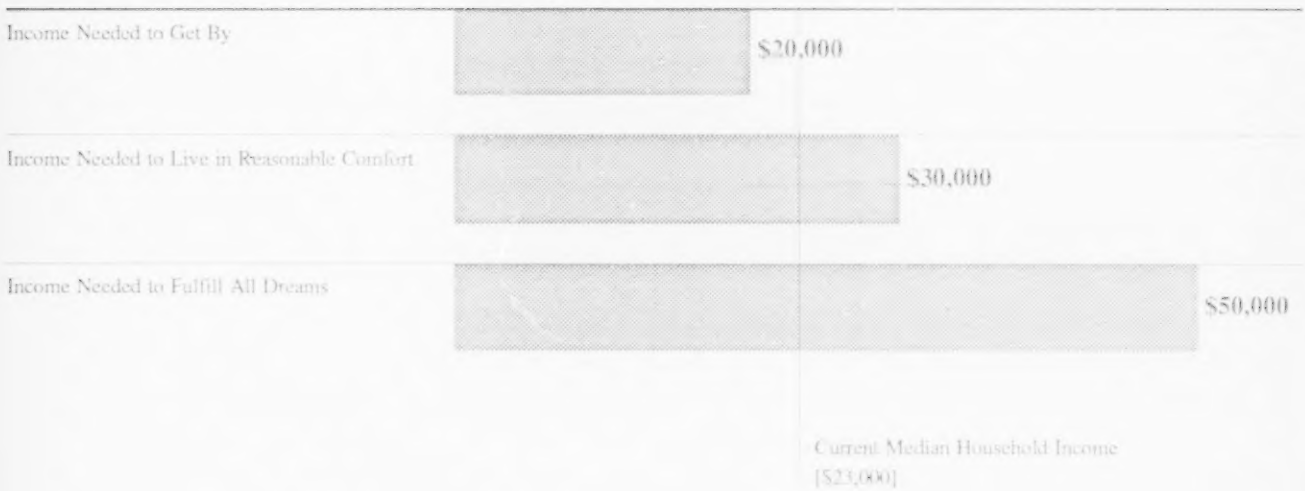
Major Findings
Chapter 5:
What Does
The American Dream Cost?

What The American Dream Costs

Respondents in this survey currently have a median annual household income of $23,000. They say they could "get by" with an annual household income of $20,000, or $3,000 less than they currently earn. To "live in reasonable comfort," they say they would need $7,000 more per year than they currently earn, or $30,000 per year. And to fulfill "all their dreams," Americans say they would need to earn an annual household income of $50,000.

Given the open–ended nature of the question, in which respondents could name any amount they wish, these results—particularly the amount the public feels they need to fulfill all their dreams—are surprisingly modest. These modest expectations help to explain vividly why so many Americans feel that The American Dream, as they define it, is within reach.

Median Annual Income Needed for Various Standards of Living [Q.19a, b, c.]



What The American Dream Costs: A Closer Look

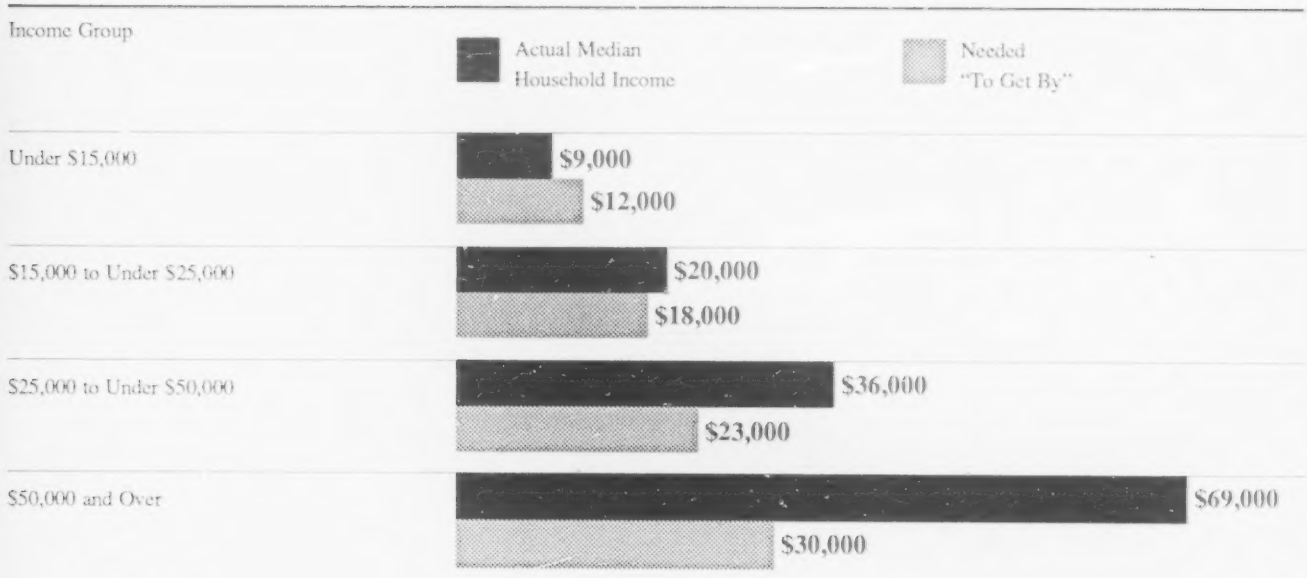
In looking at what various subgroups in the population feel they would need to earn to satisfy their needs under the various conditions, the most interesting and important differences emerge from an analysis of different income groups.

Looking first at how much people feel they need just to get by, we find that those in the lowest income group feel they would need to earn about a third **more** than they currently earn on average. All other income groups feel they could "get by" on **less** money than they currently earn—ranging from 10% less for those currently earning between $15,000 and $24,999 per year to more than 50% less for the affluent.

It is of additional interest to note that while the percentage difference in actual median household income between the lowest and highest income groups is quite large [the range is from $9,000 per year at the low end to $69,000 per year at the high end—a spread of almost 800%], the percentage difference between what the various income groups feel they need just to get by is much more narrow—only 250% [$12,000 at the low end to $30,000 at the high end]. The same pattern holds true for the amount people feel they need to live in reasonable comfort and to fulfill all their dreams.

Actual Income Vs. Income Needed "To Get By" [Q.19b.]

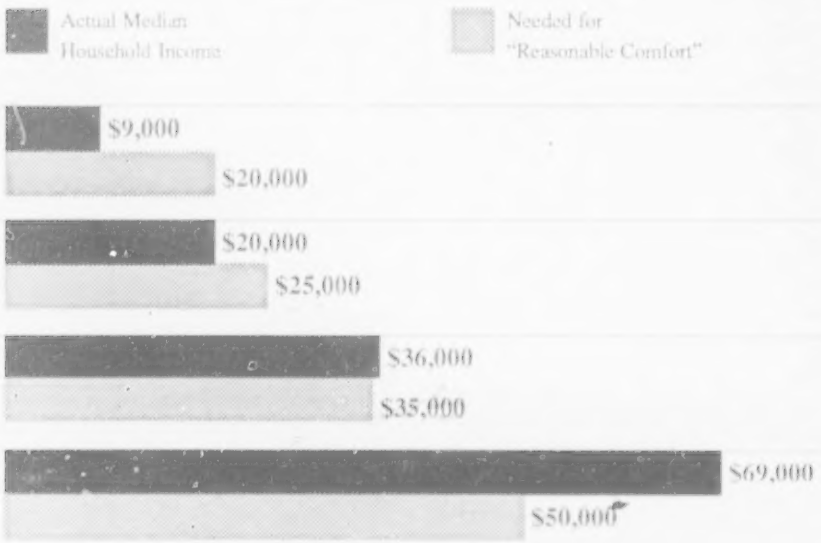
By different income groups.



What The American Dream Costs:
A Closer Look
[continued]

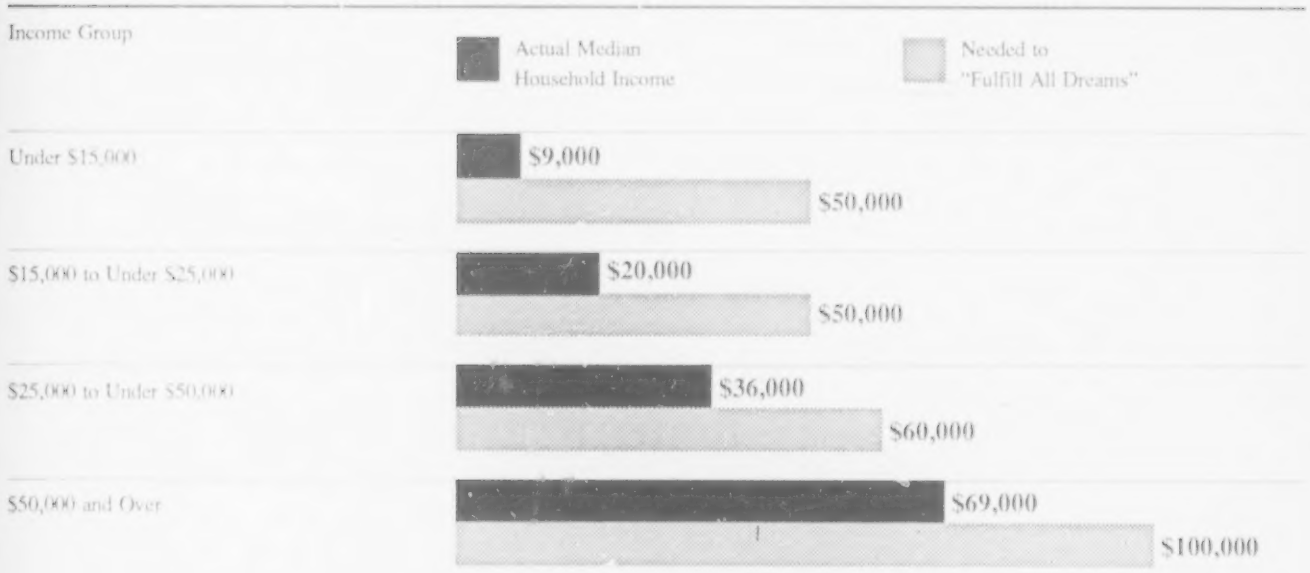
Turning now to the amount of income people feel they would need "to live in reasonable comfort," a slightly different picture emerges. In this case, we find that those who earn under $15,000 per year and those earning between $15,000 and $25,000 both feel they would need to earn **more**, while those currently earning between $25,000 and $50,000 feel they would need to earn about what they are making now. The affluent, however, feel they could live in reasonable comfort earning 28% less than they currently earn.

Actual Income Vs. Income Needed for "Reasonable Comfort" [Q.19a.]
By different income groups

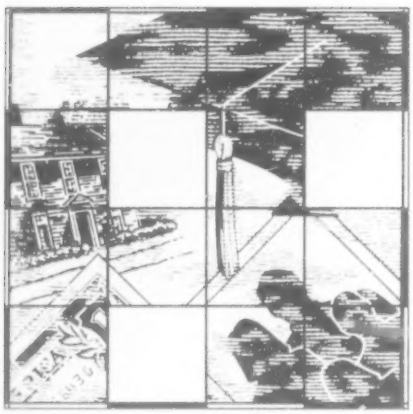


And, finally, people from all income groups feel they would need more than they currently earn in order to fulfill "all their dreams"—but not as much more as might be expected. At the low end of the income spectrum, respondents say they would need to earn $50,000 per year to fulfill all their dreams—more than 5 times what they earn at present. Americans in the $15,000 - $24,999 income bracket also feel they would need $50,000 per year to fulfill all their dreams, or 150% more than they currently earn. Those who now earn between $25,000 and $49,999 feel they would need $60,000 to fulfill their dreams, or 67% more than they currently make. And finally, Americans in the top income bracket [$50,000 or more per year] say they would need to earn $100,000 annually to fulfill all their dreams, or 45% more than they currently earn.

Actual Income Vs. Income Needed "To Fulfill All Dreams" [Q.19c.]
By different income groups.



Major Findings
Chapter 6:
The Future of
The American Dream



Major Findings
Chapter 6:
The Future of The American Dream

Chapter Introduction

Despite a high degree of optimism on the part of the public about their ability to attain—or come close to attaining—The American Dream, there is an underlying concern about the future, manifested in the public's belief that The American Dream is getting increasingly more difficult to achieve.

Illegal drugs and crime, both highly visible issues at the present time, are seen as the most severe threats to the future of The American Dream, as are some longer term concerns such as the declining quality of our educational system, large federal deficits, and environmental degradation. Long term economic trends, such as declining productivity and foreign competition, are seen as threats by substantial minorities of the public.

Major Findings
Chapter 6:
The Future of The American Dream

Attaining The American Dream: Today and Tomorrow

A 45% plurality of the American public believes that The American Dream is harder to attain today than in the past. About 1 in 4 [23%] feel The American Dream is easier to attain, while 1 in 3 [32%] feel it is about the same.

Looking ahead, a clear 55% majority of Americans feel The American Dream will be harder to attain a generation from now than it is today. Only 10% feel it will be easier to attain, while 33% feel it will be about the same.

Attaining The American Dream [Q. 14a and 14b.]
The numbers in the table represent percentages.

The American Dream Is/Will Be:	Now, Compared to the Past	A Generation from Now
Easier to Attain	23 %	10 %
Harder to Attain	45	55
About the Same	32	33
Don't Know/No Answer	1	3

But why should people feel The American Dream is harder to attain if, as seen earlier, they feel there are more opportunities today than in the past? This apparent contradiction suggests, perhaps, that while opportunity is a component—an important component—of The American Dream, it is not the totality of The American Dream. The American Dream it appears, includes two components: a financial aspect [attainable through economic and educational opportunities] and an aspect relating to the quality of life [such as relations with one's family and friends, the quality of the environment, and so forth]. What people seem to be saying, then, is that while the opportunity component of The American Dream is greater today, the other components are harder to achieve.

This concern about the future may help to further explain an earlier finding, in which it was seen that in contrast to their own quality of life, the American public is not very optimistic about the quality of life for the next generation.

Threats to The American Dream

In an effort to ascertain more specifically what people feel may threaten the future of The American Dream, respondents were presented with a list of seventeen items and asked for each to assess whether it poses a severe threat, somewhat of a threat, or no threat at all. The results reveal that the things that people say are severe threats to the future of The American Dream tend to reflect a combination of today's dominant public issues along with some longer term concerns.

The increased use of illegal drugs is seen as the most serious threat, cited by fully 79% of the public. An increase in crime is mentioned second most frequently [cited by 69%]. They are both highly visible issues at the present time.

Next on the public's list of concerns is a decline in the quality of our educational system [66%]. This is particularly relevant given the central importance of education in people's definition of The American Dream.

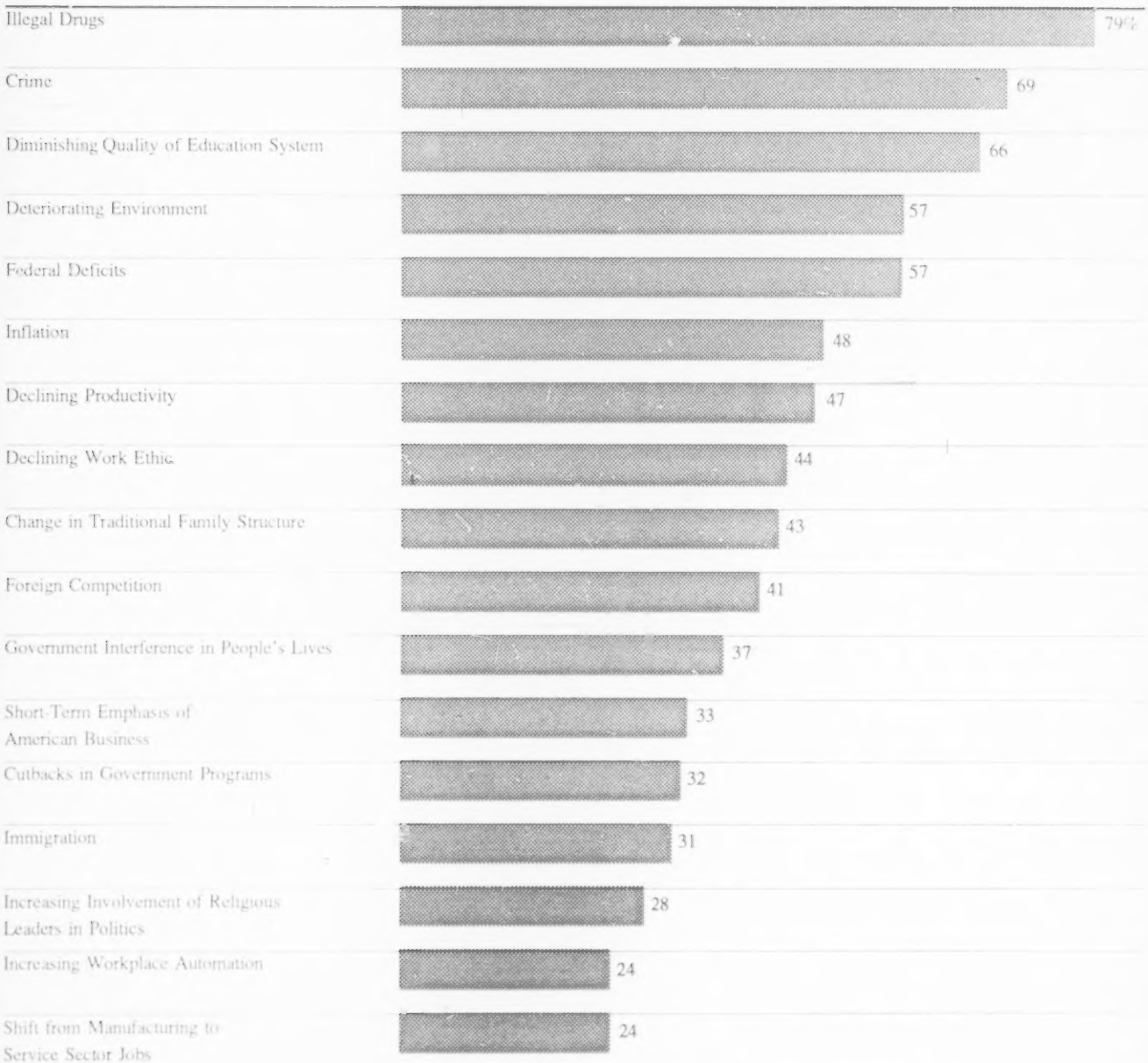
Both large federal deficits and a decline in the quality of the environment and the depletion of our natural resources are seen as threats by a 57% majority of Americans.

Long term economic trends, such as inflation, declining productivity, and foreign competition are all considered severe threats to The American Dream by a substantial minority [between 4 in 10 and 5 in 10] of the public. So, too, are a perceived decline in the American work ethic and a change in the traditional family structure.

Three government-related issues—government interference in the lives of people, cut-backs in government social programs and increasing involvement by religious leaders in government and political affairs—are mentioned by fewer than 4 in 10 of the public or less.

At the bottom of the public's list of concerns [perhaps because they are not familiar issues to most people] are two structural issues relating to the workplace—the increasing use of automation and the shift toward a service economy.

Threats to The American Dream* [Q. 18.]



*Combined responses, severely or somewhat threaten The American Dream.

Threats to The American Dream [continued]

Concern about the top five threats to The American Dream is fairly uniform across demographic groups, although there are some differences in the intensity of opinion.

In particular, concern about drugs and crime is greater among those 45 and older than it is among those who are younger. For example, drugs are a concern to 91% among those 65 and older and 88% among the 45 to 65 year olds, compared to 78% among 30 to 44 year olds and 67% among the 18 to 29 age group. Similarly, nearly 8 in 10 [79%] among those 65 and older feel increasing crime threatens the future of The American Dream, compared to only 63% among the 18 to 29 year olds. The 30 to 44 year olds and 45 to 64 year olds fall in between [at 66% and 73% respectively].

Alternatively, concern about the declining quality of the education system is greatest among younger Americans and, in fact, is seen as the most severe threat to The American Dream among 18 to 29 year olds [74%, compared to 65% among the 30 to 44 year olds, 60% among the 45 to 64 year olds, and 59% among the 65 and older group].

Greater variation of opinion is found when it comes to issues among the "second tier" threats—those which are seen as severe by less than a majority of Americans. Some of the most interesting differences are as follows:

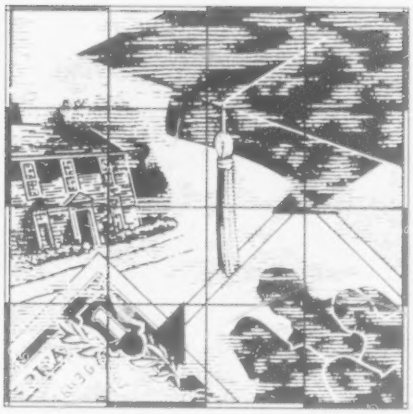
- Inflation remains a threat to a 54% majority of low income Americans [those earning under $15,000 per year] and 48% among those earing $15,000 per year and $25,000. It is of less concern to middle income Americans [those earning between $25,000 and $50,000, 44% of whom say inflation is a threat] or to the affluent [34%].

- A decline in the American work ethic is of greater concern to middle income Americans [50%] than to the less well off [41%] or the affluent [43%]. It is also of concern to 50% of those in union households.

- A change in the traditional family structure is a concern to a 51% majority of 45 to 64 year olds, but less so to those who are younger. In particular, only 34% among the 18 to 29 year olds see this as a severe threat to the future of The American Dream.

- Competition from foreign nations, which is a concern to 41% of the total public, is of greatest concern to older Americans [50%], those from union households [49%], and those with less than a high school education [49%].

- Concern about cutbacks in government social programs, cited by only 1 in 3 among the total population, is mentioned by a 51% majority among blacks.



Appendix
Survey Methodology

Description Of The Basic Sample

A nationwide cross-section of 1506 adults, 18 years of age and older, was interviewed for this study. In addition, supplemental interviews were conducted among 148 black adults [see "Supplemental Sample" on following page].

Interviews were conducted by telephone. The results are projectable to the total adult population of the Continental United States. The margin of error due to sampling is ± 2.5% at the .95 confidence level.

Sampling Method

The basic sample was drawn at random from the adult population of the Continental United States, excluding institutionalized segments of the population [such as those in Army camps, nursing homes and prisons].

Households contacted for the survey were selected at random by a procedure known as random digit dialing, which insures that households with unlisted telephone numbers, as well as those with listed numbers, are included in the sample.

Supplemental Sample

The research design called for an in-depth analysis of the views of black Americans. The basic sample yielded 110 interviews with blacks. To provide a larger and more statistically reliable base for analyzing the views of this population segment, 148 supplemental interviews were conducted, bringing the total sample size of black respondents to 258. The sample for these supplemental interviews was drawn at random using telephone exchanges from census tracts where the density of black households is known to be 30% or higher.

Weighting Procedure

The results from all 258 black respondents, including both the supplemental sample and those from the random sample, were weighted by a factor of .4 [110 ÷ 258], to correct for the oversampling of 148 blacks.

The demographic characteristics of the random sample were then compared to the most recent census estimates and corrective weights were applied to ensure proper representation of all subgroups of the population. The demographic breakdown provided on the following page shows the characteristics of both the unweighted and weighted sample.

Interviewing

Interviewing on this study was conducted in mid-October, 1986. All interviews were conducted during evening hours on weekdays and all day on weekends to ensure that both working as well as non-working segments of the population would be included.

Percentages Not Totalling 100%

Responses were computerized and rounded off to the nearest whole percent. As a result, percentages in certain tables may sometimes total slightly more or less than 100%. Also, in certain tables the results of those who said "don't know" or chose not to answer may have been omitted.

Appendix
Survey Methodology

Demographic Breakdown of Sample

** Includes oversample of 148 Blacks.*

	Unweighted *	Weighted
Number of Respondents	1654	1506
Total Sample	100%	100%
Sex		
Male	50	47
Female	50	53
Age		
18 to 29	27	28
30 to 44	36	30
45 to 64	26	25
65 and Over	11	16
Race		
White	80	86
Black	16	8
Other	5	5
Household Income		
Under $15,000	18	22
$15,000 to Under $25,000	26	27
$25,000 to Under $50,000	34	31
$50,000 and Over	13	10
Refused	9	10
Geographic Area		
Northeast	21	21
Midwest	26	26
South	33	33
West	20	19
Education		
Non-High School Graduate	13	23
High School Graduate	35	38
Some College	23	21
College Graduate or More	29	18
Occupation		
Executive/Professional	20	16
White Collar	25	22
Blue Collar	23	24
Self-Employed	12	11
Work for Someone Else	58	53

American Dream Survey

The Roper Organization
205 E. 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

Study #644-193
October, 1986

Time started:
Total minutes:

Time finished:
Respondent I.D.:

Hello, I'm [name] from The Roper Organization, a national public opinion polling firm, and we're conducting a survey on the way things are going in the country today. For this interview, may I speak to the youngest adult male, who is at least 18, who lives there and is home? [If no male is available] Then may I speak to the oldest adult female, who is at least 18, who lives there and is home?
[If no female available, terminate.]

1. Do you feel that things in this country are generally going in the right direction today, or do you feel that things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

Right direction	1
Wrong track	2
Don't know	Y

2a. How do you feel about the future? Considering everything, would you say that you're generally optimistic about the future of our country, generally pessimistic, or that you're uncertain about our country's future?

Generally optimistic	1
Generally pessimistic	2
Uncertain	3
Don't know	Y

2b. How do you feel about the future as far as you personally are concerned? Considering everything, would you say that you are generally optimistic about your personal future, generally pessimistic, or that you are uncertain about your personal future?

Generally optimistic	1
Generally pessimistic	2
Uncertain	3
Don't know	Y

3. I'd like to know more specifically what you are optimistic about and what you are pessimistic about. Let's start with [read item]—as far as the future is concerned, do you feel very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic, or very pessimistic?

	Very optimistic	Somewhat optimistic	Somewhat pessimistic	Very pessimistic	Don't know
a. Our system of government and how well it works	1	2	3	4	Y
b The nation's economic outlook for the next year or two	1	2	3	4	Y
c. The soundness of our free enterprise system over the long run	1	2	3	4	Y
d. The quality of life in this country	1	2	3	4	Y
e. Your own quality of life	1	2	3	4	Y
f. The quality of life for the next generation	1	2	3	4	Y
g. Your family's financial outlook	1	2	3	4	Y
h. The opportunities for you to get ahead	1	2	3	4	Y
i. The opportunities for the next generation to get ahead	1	2	3	4	Y

4. People have different ideas about what it means to be successful. I'm going to read you a list. For each item, please tell me whether it is a very important element of your idea of success, a somewhat important element, or a relatively unimportant element?

Interviewer: Reverse order 'a' through 'n', or 'n' through 'a'.

		Very Important	Some-what important	Un-important	Don't know
a.	Being prominent or famous	1	2	3	Y
b.	Being wealthy	1	2	3	Y
c.	Having friends who respect you	1	2	3	Y
d.	Having a happy relationship with another person	1	2	3	Y
e.	Having a happy marriage	1	2	3	Y
f.	Being a good parent	1	2	3	Y
g.	Having power and influence	1	2	3	Y
h.	Being true to your religious beliefs	1	2	3	Y
i.	Having a job that pays more than average	1	2	3	Y
j.	Being one of the best at the job you do	1	2	3	Y
k	Having ample time for leisure	1	2	3	Y
l.	Having a vacation home	1	2	3	Y
m.	Making or doing things that are useful to society	1	2	3	Y
n.	Being well educated	1	2	3	Y

5. Since the time this country was settled, the United States has been called the Land of Opportunity. Do you think there are more opportunities for Americans today than in the past, or fewer opportunities today, or about the same today as in the past?

More today	1
Fewer today	2
Same today	3
Don't know	Y

6. Thinking about your own personal situation, do you feel that you have more opportunities available to you than most Americans, fewer opportunities, or about the same level of opportunities as most Americans?

More opportunities	1
Fewer opportunities	2
Same level of opportunities	3
Don't know	Y

7. I'd like to read you a list of different places where you or the breadwinner in you: family might work. I'd like you to evaluate each one in terms of the opportunities to get ahead. Let's start with [read each item]—do you feel the opportunities to get ahead are excellent, good, only fair or poor?

	Ex-cellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know
Large business corporations	1	2	3	4	Y
Small businesses	1	2	3	4	Y
Government agencies or departments	1	2	3	4	Y
Non-profit organizations	1	2	3	4	Y
A business of one's own	1	2	3	4	Y

8. Thinking about the way your own life has turned out so far, would you say it has been primarily a matter of luck or fate, or has it been more a matter of factors which are within your control?

Luck and fate	1
Within your control	2
Combination [vol.]	3
Don't know	Y

9a. Do you feel that there are generally equal opportunities for all Americans, or do you feel that certain groups in society have fewer opportunities available to them than others?

Equal opportunities for all	1
Some groups have fewer opportunities	2
Don't know.	Y

9b. I'd like to read a list of different groups in our society. As I read each one, please tell me whether you feel they have more opportunities, or fewer opportunities, or the same level of opportunities as other Americans? Let's start with [read each item]. Interviewer: Reverse order 'a' through 'i', or 'i' through 'a'.

	More	Fewer	Same	Don't know
a. Blacks	1	2	3	Y
b. Hispanics	1	2	3	Y
c. Asian Americans	1	2	3	Y
d. Homosexuals	1	2	3	Y
e. Middle class Americans	1	2	3	Y
f. Recent immigrants	1	2	3	Y
g. The disabled	1	2	3	Y
h. Women	1	2	3	Y
i. Blue collar workers	1	2	3	Y

10. I'd like to talk with you now about a term with which you are probably familiar—The American Dream. Do you personally feel that The American Dream is very much alive today, somewhat alive, or not really alive?

Very much alive	1
Somewhat alive	2
Not really alive	3
Don't know	Y

11. I'm going to read you some possible definitions or descriptions of The American Dream, and for each one I'd like you to tell me if that's very much what you understand The American Dream to mean, or sort of what it means, or not what it means? Interviewer: reverse order 'a' through 'j', or 'j' through 'a'.

	Very much	Sort of	Not	Don't know
a. To have freedom of choice in how live one's life	1	2	3	Y
b. To be able to become wealthy	1	2	3	Y
c. To do better than one's parents did	1	2	3	Y
d. To own a home	1	2	3	Y
e. To be able to rise from clerk or worker to President of a company	1	2	3	Y
f. To be able to start a business of one's own	1	2	3	Y
g. To be able to get a high school education	1	2	3	Y
h. To be able to get a college education	1	2	3	Y
i. To be able to send one's children to college	1	2	3	Y
j. To be financially secure enough to have ample time for leisure pursuits	1	2	3	Y

12. What individual, either living or dead, famous or not famous, would you say best exemplifies your idea of The American Dream? Interviewer: record below; if individual is not well known, ask for description; if no response after 10 seconds, say, "If no one comes to mind, that's all right."

_____ [Write in]

13. When you think about The American Dream, is it something which has real meaning to you personally, something which has meaning to others but not to you, or is it just a phrase which doesn't really have meaning to anyone?

Has meaning to me	1 [Ask Q.14a]
Has meaning to others	2 [Ask Q.14a]
Has no real meaning to anyone	3 [Skip to Q.19a]
Don't know	Y[Ask Q. 14a]

14a. Compared with the past—say a generation ago—do you feel The American Dream is easier to attain today, harder to attain, or is it about the same?

Easier to attain	1
Harder to attain	2
About the same	3
Don't know	Y

14b. Looking to the future—say a generation from now—do you feel The American Dream will be easier to attain than today, harder to attain, or will it be about the same?

Easier to attain	1
Harder to attain	2
About the same	3
Don't know	Y

15. Different people are at different points along the road to The American Dream. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that you are just beginning on the road to your American Dream, however you personally define it, and 10 means you've already achieved your American Dream, where would you place yourself—at the present time?

Beginning				Midpoint					Achieved it	I have no American Dream	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X	Y

[Skip to Q.18]

16. How does this compare with where you thought you would be, say five years ago? Are you further along the road to The American Dream than you thought you would be, not as far along, or just about where you thought you'd be?

Further along	1
Not as far.	2
Just about where I thought I'd be	3
Don't know [vol.]	Y

17. Remembering that you just told me you are currently at point [read answer in Q.15] on the scale from one to ten, how far along the road to your American Dream, do you think you will ultimately get? Again, choose any number from one to ten, where one means you won't get beyond the beginning of the road to your American Dream, and a ten means you expect to reach your American Dream.

Beginning				Midpoint				Achieved It		Don't Know [vol.]
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Y

18. I am going to read to you a list of things people have said may pose a threat to the future of The American Dream. As I read each one please tell me if you feel it severely threatens the future of The American Dream, somewhat threatens it, or doesn't threaten the future of The American Dream at all. Let's start with [read each item]. Interviewer: reverse order 'a' through 'q', or 'q' through 'a'.

	Severely	Some-what	Doesn't	Don't know
a. Government interference in the lives of people	1	2	3	Y
b. Competition from foreign nations	1	2	3	Y
c. A decline in the American work ethic	1	2	3	Y
d. Large federal deficits	1	2	3	Y
e. A change in the traditional family structure	1	2	3	Y
f. Increasing involvement by religious leaders in politics and governmental affairs	1	2	3	Y
g. Inflation	1	2	3	Y
h. A shift away from manufacturing jobs, toward jobs in service industries	1	2	3	Y
i. A decline in the quality of the environment and the depletion of our natural resources	1	2	3	Y
j. A decline in the nation's rate of productivity	1	2	3	Y
k. An increase in crime	1	2	3	Y
l. An emphasis by American business on the short-term at the expense of the long-term	1	2	3	Y
m. Increased use of illegal drugs	1	2	3	Y
n. Immigration of people from other countries	1	2	3	Y
o. Increasing use of automation in the workplace	1	2	3	Y
p. Cutbacks in government social programs	1	2	3	Y
q. A decline in the quality of our educational system	1	2	3	Y

19a. Thinking about the needs of you and your family, how much income per year would you say you and your family need to live in reasonable comfort?
Write in amount: _____

19b. How much income per year do you feel you and your family would need just to get by?
Write in amount: _____

19c. And how much income per year would you say you and your family would need to fulfill all your dreams?
Write in amount: _____

These last questions are for statistical classification purposes.

D–1. Were you born in the United States or not?

Yes	1
No	2
No, but born as U.S. citizen abroad	3

D–2. Were either or both of your parents born in the U.S.?

One	1 [ASK D–3]
Both	2 [ASK D–3]
Neither	3 [SKIP TO D–4]
Don't know	Y [SKIP TO D–4]

D–3. Were any of your grandparents born in the U.S.? [If "Yes"] Of the four, how many were born in the U.S.?

One	1
Two	2
Three	3
Four	4
None	5
Don't Know	Y

D–4. Thinking politically and socially, how would you describe your own general outlook—as being very conservative, moderately conservative, middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal, or very liberal?

Very conservative	1
Moderately conservative	2
Middle–of–the–road	3
Moderately liberal	4
Very liberal	5
Don't know	Y

D–5. What is your position in the household? Are you the...? [Read off].

Male head of household	1
Female head of household	2
Another adult	3
Don't know	Y

D–6. Are you regularly employed, either full time or part time?

Full time	1 [Skip to D–8]
Part time	2 [Skip to D–8]
Not employed	3 [Ask D–7]

D–7. Are you [call off appropriate categories]:

A housewife	1 [Skip to D–13]
Unemployed	2 [Skip to D–13]
A student	3 [Skip to D–13]
Retired	4 [Skip to D–13]
Or what? [all other]	5 [Skip to D–13]

D–8. What is your occupation?
Write in and describe completely — code below after interview.

Top management, top talent and major professional	1
Executive, administrative, lesser professional	2
Owner—small retail store/business	3
Farmers [owners and managers]	4
Technicians, minor administrative	5
White collar, clerical [non–supervisory]	6
Salesmen	7
Skilled and semi–skilled labor	8
Unskilled labor	9
Service and protective workers	0

D–9. Are you self–employed or employed by someone else?

Self–employed	1
Employed by someone else	2

D–10. What is the size of the organization for whom you work?
[Read categories below].

Large—that is, 500 or more employees	1 [Ask D–11]
Medium size—that is, 100 to 499 employees	2 [Skip to D–13]
Small—that is, under 100 employees	3 [Skip to D–13]
Or do you work alone with no other employees	4 [Skip to D–13]

D–11 Is that...? [Read list.]

500 to 999 employees	1
1000 or more employees	2

[Skip to question D–13]

D–12 Is that...? [Read list.]

50 to 99 employees	1
Under 50 employees	2

D–13 Do you, or does anyone in your family living at home with you belong to a labor union?

Respondent belongs to union	1
Other family member belongs to union	2
No one belongs to union	3
Don't know	Y

D–14 What is your religious affiliation, if any—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or something else?

Protestant	1
Catholic	2
Jewish	3
Other [write in]	4
None	5
Don't know	Y

D–15 What is your current marital status?

Married	1 [Skip to D–17]
Single	2 [Ask D–16]
Widowed	3 [Ask D–16]
Separated or divorced	4 [Ask D–16]

D–16. Are you currently living with another adult with whom you are having a serious relationship?

Yes	1 [Ask D–17]
No	2 [Skip to D–18]
Don't know	Y [Skip to D–18]

D–17. Is your [husband/wife/mate] employed either full time or part time? [If "yes"] Which?

Employed full time	1
Employed part time	2
Not employed	3

D–18. How many children do you have?

None	1 [Skip to D–20]
One	2 [Ask D–19]
Two	3 [Ask D–19]
Three	4 [Ask D–19]
Four	5 [Ask D–19]
Five or more	6 [Ask D–19]

D–19. How many of them are under 18 years of age and living at home with you?

Write in	_____
None	X

D–20. Which of the following categories includes your age? [Read List]

65 and older	1
55 – 64	2
45 – 54	3
40 – 44	4
35 – 39	5
30 – 34	6
25 – 29	7
18 – 24	8
Refused	9

D–21. What was the last grade of school you completed, not counting specialized schools like secretarial, art or trade schools?

	Respondent	Parent
8th grade or less [1- 8]	1	1
Some high school [9–11]	2	2
High school graduate [12]	3	3
Some college [13–15]	4	4
College graduate [16]	5	5
Post–graduate [17+]	6	6
Don't know	Y	Y

D–22. What was the last grade of school that your mother or father [whichever one completed more school] completed? Record above.

D–23. What occupational category would you say your father was in—blue collar, that is a factory worker, construction worker, bus driver, etc., or white collar, that is someone who has an office job, or an executive or professional person, that is a lawyer, doctor, top business executive, etc.?

Blue collar	1
White collar	2
Executive/professional	3
Don't know	Y

D-24. For statistical purposes only, we need to know your total household income. I am going to read off some income categories. Would you please stop me when I name the category that best describes the combined annual income of this household, including wages or salary, pensions, interest or dividends, and all other sources?

Under $5,000	1
$5,000 to $10,000	2
$10,000 to $15,000	3
$15,000 to $20,000	4
$20,000 to $25,000	5
$25,000 to $35,000	6
$35,000 to $50,000	7
$50,000 to $75,000	8
$75,000 to $100,000, or	9
$100,000 and over	0
Refused/don't know [vol.]	Y

D–25. Are you [Read list]

White	1
Black	2
Hispanic or	3
Oriental	4
Other [vol.]	5

D–26. Do you and your family own or rent your home?

Own	1
Rent	2
Live with someone else [vol.]	3

Interviewer record:

D-27. Sex

Male	1
Female	2

D–28. Geographic Area. [Circle from sample.]

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

D–29. Metro Size [Circle from sample.]

A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4

Could I please have your name or initials for validation purposes?

Name/initials:
Phone #:
Interviewer's name:
Date:

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